

The Popol Vuh

The Creation Story Of The Quiché Maya

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PART I (Cosmogony)

Chapter 1

This is the account of how all was in suspense, all calm, in silence; all motionless, still, and the expanse of the sky was empty.

This is the first account, the first narrative. There was neither man, nor animal, birds, fishes, crabs, trees, stones, caves, ravines, grasses, nor forests; there was only the sky.

The surface of the earth had not appeared. There was only the calm sea and the great expanse of the sky.

There was nothing brought together, nothing which could make a noise, nor anything which might move, or tremble, or could make noise in the sky.

There was nothing standing; only the calm water, the placid sea, alone and tranquil. Nothing existed.

There was only immobility and silence in the darkness, in the night. Only the Creator, the Maker, Tepeu, Gucumatz, the Forefathers, were in the water surrounded with light. They were hidden under green and blue feathers, and were therefore called Gucumatz. By nature they were great sages and great thinkers. In this manner the sky existed and also the heart of

Heaven, which is the name of God and thus He is called.

Then came the word. Tepeu and Gucumatz came together in the darkness, in the night, and Tepeu and Gucumatz talked together. They talked then, discussing and deliberating; they agreed, they united their words and their thoughts.

Then while they meditated, it became clear to them that when dawn would break, man must appear. Then they planned the creation, and the growth of the trees and the thickets and the birth of life and the creation of man. Thus it was arranged in the darkness and in the night by the Heart of Heaven who is called Huracáán.

The first is called Caculháá Huracáán. The second is ChipiCaculháá. The third is Raxa-Caculháá. And these three are the Heart of Heaven.

Then Tepeu and Gucumatz came together; then they conferred about life and light, what they would do so that there would be light and dawn, who it would be who would provide food and sustenance. Thus let it be done! Let the emptiness be filled! Let the water recede and make a void, let the earth appear and become solid; let it be done. Thus they spoke. Let there be light, let there be dawn in the sky and on the earth! There shall be neither glory nor grandeur in our creation and formation until the human being is made, man is formed. So they spoke.

Then the earth was created by them. So it was, in truth, that they created the earth. Earth! they said, and instantly it was made.

Like the mist, like a cloud, and like a cloud of dust was the creation, when the mountains appeared from the water; and instantly the mountains grew.

Only by a miracle, only by magic art were the mountains and valleys formed; and instantly the groves of cypresses and pines put forth shoots together on the surface of the earth.

And thus Gucumatz was filled with joy, and exclaimed: "Your coming has been fruitful, Heart of Heaven; and you, Huracáán, and you, Chipi-Caculháá, Raxa-Caculháá!"

"Our work, our creation shall be finished," they answered.

First the earth was formed, the mountains and the valleys; the currents of water were divided, the rivulets were running freely between the hills, and the water was separated when the high mountains appeared.

Thus was the earth created, when it was formed by the Heart of Heaven, the Heart of Earth, as they are called who first made it fruitful, when the sky was in suspense, and the earth was submerged in the water. So it was that they made perfect the work, when they did it after thinking and meditating upon it.

Chapter 2

Then they made the small wild animals, the guardians of the woods, the spirits of the mountains, the deer, the birds, pumas, jaguars, serpents, snakes, vipers, guardians of the thickets.

And the Forefathers asked: "Shall there be only silence and calm under the trees, under the vines? It is well that hereafter there be someone to guard them."

So they said when they meditated and talked. Promptly the deer and the birds were created. Immediately they gave homes to the deer and the birds. "You, deer, shall sleep in the fields by the river bank and in the ravines. Here you shall be amongst the thicket, amongst the pasture; in the woods you shall multiply, you shall walk on four feet and they will support you. Thus be it done!" So it was they spoke.

Then they also assigned homes to the birds big and small. "You shall live in the trees and in the vines. There you shall make your nests; there you shall multiply; there you shall increase in the branches of the trees and in the vines." Thus the deer and the birds were told; they did their duty at once, and all sought their homes and their nests.

And the creation of all the four-footed animals and the birds being finished, they were told by the Creator and the Maker and the Forefathers: "Speak, cry, warble, call, speak each one according to your variety, each, according to your kind." So was it said to the deer, the birds, pumas, jaguars, and serpents.

"Speak, then, our names, praise us, your mother, your father. Invoke then, Huracáán, Chipi-Caculháá, Raxa-Caculháá, the Heart of Heaven, the Heart of Earth, the Creator, the Maker, the Forefathers; speak, invoke us, adore us," they were told.

But they could not make them speak like men; they only hissed and screamed and cackled; they were unable to make words, and each screamed in a different way.

When the Creator and the Maker saw that it was impossible for them to talk to each other, they said: "It is impossible for them to say our names, the names of us, their Creators and Makers. This is not well," said the Forefathers to each other.

Then they said to them: "Because it has not been possible for you to talk, you shall be changed. We have changed our minds: Your food, your pasture, your homes, and your nests you shall have; they shall be the ravines and the woods, because it has not been possible for you to adore us or invoke us. There shall be those who adore us, we shall make other [beings] who shall be obedient. Accept your destiny: your flesh shall be torn to pieces. So shall it be. This shall be your lot." So they said, when they made known their will to the large and small animals which are on the face of the earth.

They wished to give them another trial; they wished to make another attempt; they wished to make [all living things] adore them.

But they could not understand each other's speech; they could succeed in nothing, and could do nothing. For this reason they were sacrificed, and the animals which were on earth were condemned to be killed and eaten.

For this reason another attempt had to be made to create and make men by the Creator, the Maker, and the Forefathers.

"Let us try again! Already dawn draws near: Let us make him who shall nourish and sustain us! What shall we do to be invoked, in order to be remembered on earth? We have already tried with our first creations, our first creatures; but we could not make them praise and venerate us. So, then, let us try to make obedient, respectful beings who will nourish and sustain us." Thus they spoke.

Then was the creation and the formation. Of earth, of mud, they made [man's] flesh. But they saw that it was not good. It melted away, it was soft, did not move, had no strength, it fell down, it was limp, it could not move its head, its face fell to one side, its sight was blurred, it could not look behind. At first it spoke, but had no mind. Quickly it soaked in the water and could not stand.

And the Creator and the Maker said: "Let us try again because our creatures will not be able to walk nor multiply. Let us consider this," they said.

Then they broke up and destroyed their work and their creation. And they said: "What shall we do to perfect it, in order that our worshipers, our invokers, will be successful?"

Thus they spoke when they conferred again: "Let us say again to Xpiyacoc, Xmucanéé, Hunahpúú-Vuch, Hunahpúú-Utiúú: 'Cast your lot again. Try to create again.' " In this manner the Creator and the Maker spoke to Xpiyacoc and Xmucanéé.

Then they spoke to those soothsayers, the Grandmother of the day, the Grandmother of the Dawn, as they were called by the Creator and the Maker, and whose names were Xpiyacoc and Xmucanéé.

And said Huracáán, Tepeu, and Gucumatz when they spoke to the soothsayer, to the Maker, who are the diviners: "You must work together and find the means so that man, whom we shall make, man, whom we are going to make, will nourish and sustain us, invoke and remember us."

"Enter, then, into council, grandmother, grandfather, our grandmother, our grandfather, Xpiyacoc, Xmucanéé, make light, make dawn, have us invoked, have us adored, have us remembered by created man, by made man, by mortal man. Thus be it done.

"Let your nature be known, Hunahpúú-Vuch, Hunahpúú-Utiúú, twice mother, twice father, Nim-Ac, Nima-Tziíís, the master of emeralds, the worker in jewels, the sculptor, the carver, the maker of beautiful plates, the maker of green gourds, the master of resin, the master Toltecat, grandmother of the sun, grandmother of dawn, as you will be called by our works and our creatures.

"Cast the lot with your grains of corn and the tzitéé. Do it thus, and we shall know if we are to make, or carve his mouth and eyes out of wood." Thus the diviners were told.

They went down at once to make their divination, and cast their lots with the corn and the tzitéé. "Fate! Creature! said an old woman and an old man. And this old man was the one who cast the lots with Tzitéé, the one called Xpiyacoc. And the old woman was the diviner, the maker, called Chiracáán Xmucanéé.

Beginning the divination, they said: "Get together, grasp each other! Speak, that we may hear." They said, "Say if it is well that the wood be got together and that it be carved by the Creator and the Maker, and if this [man of wood] is he who must nourish and sustain us when there is light when it is day!

"Thou, corn; thou, tzitéé; thou, fate; thou, creature; get together, take each other," they said to the corn, to the tzitéé, to fate, to the creature. "Come to sacrifice here, Heart of Heaven; do not punish Tepeu and Gucumatz!

Then they talked and spoke the truth: "Your figures of wood shall come out well; they shall speak and talk on earth."

"So may it be," they answered when they spoke.

And instantly the figures were made of wood. They looked like men, talked like men, and populated the surface of the earth.

They existed and multiplied; they had daughters, they had sons, these wooden figures; but they did not have souls, nor minds, they did not remember their Creator, their Maker; they walked on all fours, aimlessly.

They no longer remembered the Heart of Heaven and therefore they fell out of favor. It was merely a trial, an attempt at man. At first they spoke, but their face was without expression; their feet and hands had no strength; they had no blood, nor substance, nor moisture, nor flesh; their cheeks were dry, their feet and hands were dry, and their flesh was yellow.

Therefore, they no longer thought of their Creator nor their Maker, nor of those who made them and cared for them.

These were the first men who existed in great numbers on the face of the earth.

Chapter 3

Immediately the wooden figures were annihilated, destroyed, broken up, and killed.

A flood was brought about by the Heart of Heaven; a great flood was formed which fell on the heads of the wooden creatures.

Of tzitéé, the flesh of man was made, but when woman was fashioned by the Creator and the Maker, her flesh was made of rushes. These were the materials the Creator and the Maker wanted to use in making them.

But those that they had made, that they had created, did not think, did not speak with their Creator, their Maker. And for this reason they were killed, they were deluged. A heavy resin fell from the sky. The one called Xecotcovach came and gouged out their eyes; Camalotz came and cut off their heads; Cotzbalam came and devoured their flesh. Tucumbalam came, too, and broke and mangled their bones and their nerves, and ground and crumbled their bones.

This was to punish them because they had not thought of their mother, nor their father, the Heart of Heaven, called Huracáán. And for this reason the face of the earth was darkened and a black rain began to fall, by day and by night.

Then came the small animals and the large animals, and sticks and stones struck their faces. And all began to speak: their earthen jars, their griddles, their plates, their pots, their grinding stones, all rose up and struck their faces.

"You have done us much harm; you ate us, and now we shall kill you," said their dogs and birds of the barnyard.

And the grinding stones said: "We were tormented by you; every day, every day, at night, at dawn, all the time our faces went holi, holi, huqui, huqui, because of you. This was the tribute we paid you. But now that you are no longer men, you shall feel our strength. We shall grind and tear your flesh to pieces," said their grinding stones.

And then their dogs spoke and said: "Why did you give us nothing to eat? You scarcely looked at us, but you chased us and threw us out. You always had a stick ready to strike us while you were eating.

"Thus it was that you treated us. You did not speak to us. Perhaps we shall not kill you now; but why did you not look ahead, why did you not think about yourselves? Now we shall destroy you, now you shall feel the teeth of our mouths; we shall devour you," said the dogs, and then, they destroyed their faces.

And at the same time, their griddles and pots spoke: "Pain and suffering you have caused us. Our mouths and our faces were blackened with soot; we were always put on the fire and you burned us as though we felt no pain. Now you shall feel it, we shall burn you," said their pots, and they all destroyed their [the wooden men's] faces. The stones of the hearth, which were heaped together, hurled themselves straight from the fire against their heads causing them pain.

The desperate ones [the men of wood] ran as quickly as they could; they wanted to climb to the tops of the houses, and the houses fell down and threw them to the ground; they wanted to climb to the treetops, and the trees cast them far away; they wanted to enter the caverns, and the caverns repelled them.

So was the ruin of the men who had been created and formed, the men made to be destroyed and annihilated; the mouths and faces of all of them were mangled.

And it is said that their descendants are the monkeys which now live in the forests; these are all that remain of them because their flesh was made only of wood by the Creator and the Maker.

And therefore the monkey looks like man, and is an example of a generation of men which were created and made but were only wooden figures.

Chapter 4

It was cloudy and twilight then on the face of the earth. There was no sun yet. Nevertheless, there was a being called Vucub-Caquix who was very proud of himself.

The sky and the earth existed, but the faces of the sun and the moon were covered.

And he [Vucub-Caquix] said: "Truly, they are clear examples of those people who were drowned, and their nature is that of supernatural beings.

"I shall now be great above all the beings created and formed. I am the sun, the light, the moon," he exclaimed. "Great is my splendor. Because of me men shall walk and conquer. For my eyes are of silver, bright, resplendent as precious stones, as emeralds; my teeth shine like perfect stones, like the face of the sky. My nose shines afar like the moon, my throne is of silver, and the face of the earth is lighted when I pass before my throne.

"So, then, I am the sun, I am the moon, for all mankind. So shall it be, because I can see very far."

So Vucub-Caquix spoke. But he was not really the sun; he was only vainglorious of his feathers and his riches. And he could see only as far as the horizon, and he could not see over all the world. The face of the sun had not yet appeared, nor that of the moon, nor the stars, and it had not dawned. Therefore, Vucub-Caquix became as vain as though he were the sun and the moon, because the light of the sun and the moon had not yet shown itself. His only ambition was to exalt himself and to dominate. And all this happened when the flood came because of the wooden people. Now we shall tell how Vucub-Caquix was overthrown and died, and how man was made by the Creator and the Maker.

Chapter 5

This is the beginning of the defeat and the ruin of the glory of Vucub-Caquix brought about by two youths, the first of whom was called Hunahpúú and the second, Xbalanquéé. They were really gods. When they saw the harm which the arrogant one had done, and wished to do, in the presence of the Heart of Heaven, the youths said:

"It is not good that it be so, when man does not yet live here on earth. Therefore, we shall try to shoot him with our blowgun when he is eating. We shall shoot him and make him sicken, and then that will be the end of his riches, his green stones, his precious metals, his emeralds, his jewels of which he is so proud. And this shall be the lot of all men, for they must not become vain, because of power and riches.

"Thus shall it be," said the youths, each one putting his blowgun to his shoulder.

Well, now Vucub-Caquix had two sons: the first was called Zipacnáá, the second was Cabracáán; and the mother of the two was called Chimalmat, the wife of Vucub-Caquix.

Well, Zipacnáá played ball with the large mountains: with Chigag, Hunahpúú, Pecul, Yaxcanul, Macamob, and Huliznab. These are the names of the mountains which existed when it dawned and which were created in a single night by Zipacnáá.

In this way, then, Cabracáán moved the mountains and made the large and small mountains tremble.

And in this way the sons of Vucub-Caquix proclaimed their pride. "Listen! I am the sun!," said Vucub-Caquix. "I am he who made the earth!" said Zipacnáá. "I am he who shook the sky and made the earth tremble!" said Cabracáán. In this way the sons of Vucub-Caquix followed the example of their father's assumed greatness. And this seemed very evil to the youths. Neither our first mother nor our first father had yet been created.

Therefore, the deaths of Vucub-Caquix and his sons and their destruction was decided upon by the youths.

Chapter 6

Now we shall tell how the two Youths shot their blowguns at Vucub-Caquix and how each one of those, who had become arrogant, was destroyed.

Vucub-Caquix had a large nantze tree and he ate the fruit of it. Each day he went to the tree and climbed to the top. Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé had seen that this fruit was his food. And they lay in ambush at the foot of the tree, hidden among the leaves. Vucub-Caquix came straight to his meal of nantzes.

Instantly he was injured by a discharge from Hun-Hunahpúú's blowgun which struck him squarely in the jaw, and screaming, he fell straight to earth from the treetop.

Hun-Hunahpúú ran quickly to overpower him, but Vucub-Caquix seized his arm and wrenching it from him, bent it back to the shoulder. In this way Vucub-Caquix tore out Hun-Hunahpúú's arm. Surely the two youths did well in not letting themselves be defeated first by Vucub-Caquix.

Carrying Hun-Hunahpúú's arm, Vucub-Caquix went home, and arrived there nursing his jaw.

"What has happened to you, my lord?" said Chimalmat, his wife.

"What could it be, but those two demons who shot me with blowguns and dislocated my jaw? For that reason my teeth are loose and pain me very much. But I have brought it [his arm], to put it on the fire. Let it hang there over the fire, for surely these demons will come looking for it." So said Vucub-Caquix as he hung up the arm of Hun-Hunahpúú.

Having thought it over, Hun-Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé went to talk with an old man who had snow-white hair and with an old woman, really very old and humble, both already bent, like very old people. The old man was called Zaqui-Nim-Ac and the old woman, Zaqui-Nima-Tziis. The youths said to the old woman and the old man:

"Come with us to Vucub-Caquix's house to get our arm. We will follow you, and you shall tell them: 'These

with us are our grandchildren; their mother and father are dead; so they follow us everywhere we are given alms, for the only thing that we know how to do is take the worm from the teeth.'

"So Vucub-Caquix shall think we are boys and we shall also be there to advise you," said the two youths.

"Very well," answered the old man and woman.

Then they started out for the place where they found Vucub-Caquix reclining on his throne. The old woman and man walked along followed by the two boys, who stayed behind them. In this way they arrived at the house of the lord who was screaming because his tooth pained him.

When Vucub-Caquix saw the old man and the old woman and those who accompanied them, he asked, "Where do you come from, grandparents?"

"We come looking for something to eat, honorable sir," they answered.

"And what do you eat? Are those not your sons who are with you?"

"Oh, no, sir! They are our grandsons; but we are sorry for them and what is given to us, we share with them, sir," answered the old woman and the old man.

Meanwhile, the lord was suffering terrible pain from his tooth, and it was only with great difficulty that he could speak.

"I earnestly beseech you to have pity on me. What can you do? What do you know how to cure?" the lord asked them.

And the old ones answered, "Oh, sir! we only take the worm from the teeth, cure the eyes, and set bones."

"Very well. Cure my teeth, which are really making me suffer day and night, and because of them and of my eyes I cannot be calm and cannot sleep. All of this is because two demons shot me with a pellet [from their blowgun] and for that reason I cannot eat. Have pity on me, then, tighten my teeth with your hands."

"Very well, sir. It is a worm which makes you suffer. It will end when these teeth are pulled and others put in their place."

"It is not well that you pull my teeth, because it is only with them that I am a lord and all my ornaments are my teeth and my eyes."

"We will put others of ground bone in their place." But the ground bone was nothing but grains of white corn.

"Very well, pull them out, come and relieve me," he replied.

Then they pulled Vucub-Caquix's teeth; but in their place they put only grains of white corn, and these grains of corn shone in his mouth. Instantly his features sagged and he no longer looked like a lord. They removed the rest of his teeth which shone like pearls in his mouth. And finally they cured Vucub-Caquix's eyes, piercing the pupils of his eyes, and they took all his riches.

But he felt nothing any more. He only watched, because at the advice of Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé, they took from him all of the things of which he had been so proud.

Then Vucub-Caquix died. Hun-Hunahpúú recovered his arm. Chimalmat, the wife of Vucub-Caquix, also perished.

In this way Vucub-Caquix lost his riches. The healer took all the emeralds and precious stones which had been his pride here on earth.

The old woman and the old man who did this were miraculous beings; and having recovered the arm of Hun-Hunahpúú, they put it in place, and it was all right again.

It was only to bring about the death of Vucub-Caquix that they did this, because it seemed wicked to them that he should become so arrogant.

And then the two youths went on, having in this way carried out the order of the Heart of Heaven.

Chapter 7

Here now are the deeds of Zipacnáá, the elder, son of Vucub-Caquix.

"I am the creator of the mountains," said Zipacnáá.

Zipacnáá was bathing at the edge of a river when four hundred youths passed dragging a log to support their house. The four hundred were walking, after having cut down a large tree to make the ridge-pole of their house.

Then Zipacnáá came up, and going toward the four hundred youths, said to them: "What are you doing, boys?"

"It is only this log," they answered, "which we cannot lift and carry on our shoulders."

"I will carry it. Where does it have to go? What do you want it for?"

"For a ridge-pole for our house."

"All right," he answered, and lifting it up, he put it on his shoulders and carried it to the entrance of the house of the four hundred boys.

"Now stay with us, boy," they said. "Have you a mother or father?"

"I have neither," he answered.

"Then we shall hire you tomorrow to prepare another log to support our house."

"Good," he answered.

The four hundred boys talked together then, and said:

"How shall we kill this boy? Because it is not good what he has done lifting the log alone. Let us make a big hole and push him so that he will fall into it. 'Go down and take out the earth and carry it from the pit,' we shall tell him, and when he stoops down, to go down into the pit, we shall let the large log fall on him and he will die there in the pit."

So said the four hundred boys, and then they dug a large, very deep pit. Then they called Zipacnáá.

"We like you very much. Go, go and dig dirt, for we cannot reach [the bottom of the pit]," they said.

"All right," he answered. He went at once into the pit. And calling to him as he was digging the dirt, they said: "Have you gone down very deep yet?"

"Yes," he answered, beginning to dig the pit. But the pit which he was making was to save him from danger. He knew that they wanted to kill him; so when he dug the pit, he made a second hole at one side in order to free himself.

"How far [have you gone]?" the four hundred boys called down.

"I am still digging; I will call up to you when I have finished the digging," said Zipacnáá from the bottom of the pit. But he was not digging his grave; instead he was opening another pit in order to save himself.

At last Zipacnáá called to them. But when he called, he was already safe in the second pit.

"Come and take out and carry away the dirt which I have dug and which is in the bottom of the pit," he said, "because in truth I have made it very deep. Do you not hear my call? Nevertheless, your calls, your words repeat themselves like an echo once, twice, and so I hear well where you are." So Zipacnáá called from the pit where he was hidden, shouting from the depths.

Then the boys hurled the great log violently, and it fell quickly with a thud to the bottom of the pit.

"Let no one speak! Let us wait until we hear his dying screams," they said to each other, whispering, and each one covered his face as the log fell noisily. He [Zipacnáá] spoke then, crying out, but he called only once when the log fell to the bottom.

"How well we have succeeded in this! Now he is dead," said the boys. "If, unfortunately, he had continued what he had begun to do, we would have been lost, because he already had interfered with us, the four hundred boys."

And filled with joy they said: "Now we must make our chicha within the next three days. When the three days are passed, we shall drink to the construction of our new house, we, the four hundred boys." Then they said: "Tomorrow we shall look, and day after tomorrow, we shall also look to see if the ants do not come out of the earth when the body smells and begins to rot. Presently we shall become calm and drink our chicha," they said.

But from his pit Zipacnáá listened to everything the boys said. And later, on the second day, multitudes of ants came, going and coming and gathering under the log. Some carried Zipacnáá's hair in their mouths, and others carried his fingernails.

When the boys saw this, they said, "That devil has now perished. Look how the ants have gathered, how they have come by hordes, some bringing his hair and others his fingernails. Look what we have done!"

So they spoke to each other.

Nevertheless, Zipacnáá was very much alive. He had cut his hair and gnawed off his fingernails to give them to the ants.

And so the four hundred boys believed that he was dead, and on the third day they began the orgy and all of the boys got drunk. And the four hundred being drunk knew nothing any more. And then Zipacnáá let the house fall on their heads and killed all of them.

Not even one or two among the four hundred were saved; they were killed by Zipacnáá, son of Vucub-Caquix.

In this way the four hundred boys died, and it is said that they became the group of stars which because of them are called Motz, but it may not be true.

Chapter 8

Now we shall tell how Zipacnáá was defeated by the two boys, Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé.

Now follows the defeat and death of Zipacnáá, when he was overcome by the two boys, Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé.

The boys' hearts were full of rancor because the four hundred young men had been killed by Zipacnáá. And he only hunted fish and crabs at the bank of the river, which were his daily food. During the day he went about looking for food, and at night he carried mountains on his back.

With a leaf of the ec plant which is found in the forest, Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé quickly made a figure to look like a very large crab.

With this they made the stomach of the crab; the claws, they made of pahac, and for the shell, which covers the back, they used a stone. Then they put the crab at the bottom of a cave at the foot of a large mountain called Meaguáán, where he was overcome.

Then the boys went to find Zipacnáá on the river bank.

"Where are you going, young man?" they asked him.

"I am not going anywhere," Zipacnáá answered, "only looking for food, boys."

"And what is your food?"

"Fish and crabs, but there are none here and I have not found any; I have not eaten since day before yesterday, and I am dying of hunger," said Zipacnáá to Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé.

"Over there in the bottom of the ravine there is a crab, a really large crab, and it would be well if you would eat it! Only it bit us when we tried to catch it and so we were afraid. We wouldn't try to catch it for anything," said Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé.

"Have pity on me! Come and show it to me, boys," begged Zipacnáá.

"We do not want to. You go alone, you will not get lost. Follow the bank of the river and you will come out at the foot of a large hill; there it is making a noise at the bottom of the ravine. You have only to go there," said Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé.

"Oh, unfortunate me! Won't you accompany me, boys? Come and show it to me. There are many birds which you can shoot with your blowguns and I know where to find them," said Zipacnáá.

His meekness convinced the boys. And they asked him: "But, can you really catch him? Because it is only for you that we are returning; we are not going to try to get it again because it bit us when we were crawling into the cave. After that we were afraid to crawl in, but we almost caught it. So, then, it is best that you crawl in," they said.

"Very well," said Zipacnáá, and then they went with him. They arrived at the bottom of the ravine and there, stretched on his back, was the crab, showing his red shell. And there also in the bottom of the ravine was the boys' hoax.

"Good! Good!" said Zipacnáá happily. "I should like to have it in my mouth already!" And he was really dying of hunger. He wanted to try to crawl in, he wanted to enter, but the crab was climbing. He came out at once and the boys asked, "Did you not get it?"

"No," he answered, "because he was going up and I almost caught him. But perhaps it would be good if I go in from above," he added. And then he entered again from above, but as he was almost inside, with only the soles of his feet showing, the great hill slid and fell slowly down on his chest.

Zipacnáá never returned and he was changed into stone.

In this way Zipacnáá was defeated by the two boys, Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé; he was the elder son of Vucub-Caquix, and he, according to the ancient legend, was the one who made the mountains.

At the foot of the hill called Meaguáán he was vanquished. Only by a miracle was he vanquished, the second of the arrogant ones. One was left, whose history we shall tell now.

Chapter 9

The third of the arrogant ones was the second son of Vucub-Caquix who was called Cabracáán.

"I demolish the mountains," he said.

But Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé also defeated Cabracáán. Huracáán Chipi-Caculháá, and Raxa-Caculháá talked and said to Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé:

"Let the second son of Vucub-Caquix also be defeated. This is our will, for it is not well what they do on earth, exalting their glory, their grandeur, and their power, and it must not be so. Lure him to where the sun rises," said Huracáán to the two youths.

"Very well, honored sir," they answered, "because what we see is not right. Do you not exist, you who are the peace, you, Heart of Heaven?" said the boys as they listened to the command of Huracáán.

Meanwhile, Cabracáán was busy shaking the mountains. At the gentlest tap of his feet on the earth, the large and small mountains opened. Thus the boys found him and asked Cabracáán:

"Where are you going, young man? "

"Nowhere," he answered, "here I am moving the mountains, and I am leveling them to the ground forever, he answered.

Then Cabracáán asked Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé, "What did you come to do here? I do not recognize you. What are your names?" said Cabracáán.

"We have no names," they answered, "we are nothing more than shooters of blowguns and hunters with bird-traps on the mountains. We are poor and we have nothing, young man. We only walk over the large and small mountains, young man, and we have just seen a large mountain, over there where you see the pink sky. It really rises up very high and overlooks the tops of all the hills. So it is that we have not been able to catch even one or two of the birds on it, boy. But, is it true that you can level all the mountains?" Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé asked Cabracáán.

"Have you really seen the mountain of which you speak? Where is it? If I see it, I shall demolish it. Where did you see it?"

"Over there it is, where the sun rises," said Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé.

"Very well, show me the road," he said to the two boys.

"Oh no!" they answered. "We must take you between us. One shall go at your left and the other at your right, because we have our blowguns, and if there should be birds we can shoot them." And so they set out happily, trying out their blowguns. But when they shot with them, they did not use the clay pellets in the tube of the blowgun; instead they felled the birds only with the puff of air when they shot them, which surprised Cabracáán very much.

Then the boys built a fire and put the birds on it to roast, but they rubbed one of the birds with chalk, covering it with a white earth soil.

"We shall give him this," they said, "to whet his appetite with the odor which it gives off. This bird of ours shall be his ruin, as we cover this bird with earth so we shall bring him down to the earth and bury him in the earth.

"Great shall be the wisdom of a created being, of a being fashioned, when it dawns, when there is light," said the boys.

"As it is natural for man to wish to eat, so Cabracáán desires food," said Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé to each other.

Meanwhile the birds were roasting, they were beginning to turn golden brown, and the fat and juice which dripped from them made an appetizing odor. Cabracáán wanted very much to eat them; they made his mouth water, he yawned, and the saliva and spittle drooled because of the smell which the birds gave off. Then he asked them: "What is that you eat? The smell is really savoury. Give me a little piece," he said to them.

Then they gave a bird to Cabracáán, the one which would be his ruin; and when he had finished eating it, they set out toward the east where the great mountain was. But already Cabracáán's legs and hands were weakening and he had no strength because of the earth with which the bird he had eaten was rubbed, and he could do nothing to the mountains. Neither was it possible to level them.

Then the boys tied him, they tied his hands behind him and also tied his neck and his feet together. Then they threw him to the ground and there they buried him.

In this way Cabracáán was overcome by Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé. It would be impossible to tell of all the things they did here on earth.

Now we shall tell of the birth of Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé, having first told of the destruction of Vucub-Caquix and that of Zipacnáá and of Cabracáán, here on earth.

PART II (Anthropogony)

Chapter 1

Now we shall also tell the name of the father of Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé. We shall not tell his origin and we shall not tell the history of the birth of Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé. We shall tell only half of it, only a part of the history of his father.

Here is the story. Here are the names of Hun-Hunahpúú [and Vucub-Hunahpúú], as they are called. Their parents were Xpiyacoc and Xmucanéé. During the night Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú were born of Xpiyacoc and Xmucanéé.

Well now, Hun-Hunahpúú had begotten two sons; the first was called Hunbatz and the second Hunchouéén.

The mother of the two sons was called Xbaquiyalo. Thus was the wife of Hun-Hunahpúú called. As for the

other son, Vucub-Hunahpúú, he had no wife; he was single.

By nature these two sons were very wise, and great was their wisdom; on earth they were soothsayers of good disposition and good habits. All the arts were taught to Hunbatz and Hunchouéén, the sons of Hun-Hunahpúú. They were flautists, singers, shooters with blowguns, painters, sculptors, jewelers, silversmiths; these were Hunbatz and Hunchouéén.

Well, Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú did nothing but play dice and ball all day long; and when the four got together to play ball, one pair played against the other pair.

And Voc, the messenger of Huracáán, of Chipi-Caculháá, of Raxa-Caculháá came there to watch them, but Voc did not stay far from the earth nor far from Xibalba, and in an instant he went up to heaven to the side of Huracáán.

They were still here on earth when the mother of Hunbatz and Hunchouéén died.

And having gone to play ball on the road to Xibalba, they were overheard by Hun-Camée and Vucub-Camée, the lords of Xibalba.

"What are they doing on earth? Who are they who are making the earth shake, and making so much noise? Go and call them! Let them come here to play ball. Here we will overpower them! We are no longer respected by them. They no longer have consideration, or fear of our rank, and they even fight above our heads," said all the lords of Xibalba.

All of them held a council. Those called Hun-Camée and

All of them held a council. Those called Hun-Camée and

Vucub-Camée were the supreme judges. All the lords had been assigned their duties. Each one was given his own authority by Hun-Camée and Vucub-Camée.

They were, then, Xiquiripat and Cuchumaquic lords of these names. They were the two who caused the shedding of blood of the men.

Others were called Ahalpuh and Ahalganáá, also lords. And their work was to make men swell and make pus gush forth from their legs and stain their faces yellow, what is called Chuganal. Such was the work of Ahalpuh and Ahalganáá.

Others were Lord Chamiabac and Lord Chamiaholom, constables of Xibalba, whose staffs were of bone. Their work was to make men waste away until they were nothing but skin and bone and they died, and they carried them with their stomach and bones stretched out. This was the work of Chamiabac and Chamiaholom, as they were called.

Others were called Lord Ahalmez and Lord Ahaltocob; their work was to bring disaster upon men, as they were going home, or in front of it, and they would be found wounded, stretched out, face up, on the ground, dead. This was the work of Ahalmez and Ahaltocob, as they were called.

Immediately after them were other lords named Xic and Patáán whose work it was to cause men to die on the road, which is called sudden death, making blood to rush to their mouths until they died vomiting blood. The work of each one of these lords was to seize upon them, squeeze their throats and chests, so that the men died on the road, making the blood rush to their throats when they were walking. This was the work of Xic and Patáán.

And having gathered in council, they discussed how to torment and wound Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú. What the Lords of Xibalba coveted were the playing implements of Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú--their leather pads and rings and gloves and crown and masks which were the playing gear of Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú.

Now we shall tell of their journey to Xibalba and how they left behind them the sons of Hun-Hunahpúú, Hunbatz, and [Hun] Chouéén, whose mother had died.

Then we shall tell how Hunbatz and Hunchouéén were overcome by Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé.

Chapter 2

The messengers of Hun-Camée and Vucub-Camée arrived immediately.

"Go, Ahpop Achih! they were told. "Go and call Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú. Say to them, 'Come with us. The lords say that you must come.' They must come here to play ball with us so that they shall make us happy, for really they amaze us. So, then, they must come," said the lords. "And have them bring their playing gear, their rings, their gloves, and have them bring their rubber balls, too," said the lords. "Tell them to come quickly," they told the messengers.

And these messengers were owls: Chabi-Tucur, Huracáán-Tucur, Caquix-Tucur and Holom-Tucur. These were the names of the messengers of Xibalba.

Chabi-Tucur was swift as an arrow; Huracáán-Tucur had only one leg; Caquix-Tucur had a red back, and

Holom-Tucur had only a head, no legs, but he had wings.

The four messengers had the rank of Ahpop-Achih. Leaving Xibalba, they arrived quickly, bringing their message to the court where Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú were playing ball, at the ball-court which was called Nim-Xob Carchah. The owl messengers went directly to the ball-court and delivered their message exactly as it was given to them by Hun-Caméé, Vucub-Caméé, Ahalpuh, Ahalganáá, Chamiabac, Chamiaholom, Xiquiripat, Cuchumaquic, Ahalmez, Ahaltocob, Xic, and Patáán, as the lords were called who sent the message by the owls.

"Did the Lords Hun-Caméé and Vucub-Caméé really say that we must go with you?"

"They certainly said so, and 'Let them bring all their playing gear,' the lords said."

"Very well," said the youths. Wait for us, we are only going to say good-bye to our mother."

And having gone straight home, they said to their mother, for their father was dead: "We are going, our mother, but our going is only for a while. The messengers of the lord have come to take us. 'They must come,' they said, according to the messengers.

"We shall leave our ball here in pledge," they added. They went immediately to hang it in the space under the roof-tree. "We will return to play," they said.

And going to Hunbatz and Hunchouéen they said to them: "Keep on playing the flute and singing, painting, and carving; warm our house and warm the heart of your grandmother."

When they took leave of their mother, Xmucanéé was moved and burst into tears. "Do not worry, we are going, but we have not died yet," said Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú as they left.

Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú went immediately and the messengers took them on the road.

Thus they were descending the road to Xibalba, by some very steep stairs. They went down until they came to the bank of a river which flowed rapidly between the ravines called Nuziváán cul and Cuziváán, and crossed it. Then they crossed the river which flows among thorny calabash trees. There were very many calabash trees, but they passed through them without hurting themselves.

Then they came to the bank of a river of blood and crossed it without drinking its waters; they only went to the river bank and so they were not overcome. They went on until they came to where four roads joined, and there at the crossroads they were overcome.

One of the four roads was red, another black, another white, and another yellow. And the black road said to them: "I am the one you must take because I am the way of the Lord." So said the road.

And from here on they were already overcome. They were taken over the road to Xibalba and when they arrived at the council room of the Lords of Xibalba, they had already lost the match.

Well, the first ones who were seated there were only figures of wood, arranged by the men of Xibalba.

These they greeted first:

"How are you, Hun-Caméé?" they said to the wooden man. "How are you, Vucub-Caméé?" they said to the other wooden man. But they did not answer. Instantly the Lords of Xibalba burst into laughter and all the other lords began to laugh loudly, because they already took for granted the downfall and defeat of Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú. And they continued to laugh.

Then Hun-Caméé and Vucub-Caméé spoke: "Very well," they said. "You have come. Tomorrow you shall prepare the mask, your rings, and your gloves," they said.

"Come and sit down on our bench," they said. But the bench which they offered them was of hot stone, and when they sat down they were burned. They began to squirm around on the bench, and if they had not stood up they would have burned their seats.

The Lords of Xibalba burst out laughing again; they were dying of laughter; they writhed from pain in their stomach, in their blood, and in their bones, caused by their laughter, all the Lords of Xibalba laughed.

"Go now to that house," they said. "There you will get your sticks of fat pine and your cigar and there you shall sleep."

Immediately they arrived at the House of Gloom. There was only darkness within the house. Meanwhile the Lords of Xibalba discussed what they should do.

"Let us sacrifice them tomorrow, let them die quickly, quickly, so that we can have their playing gear to use in play," said the Lords of Xibalba to each other.

Well, their fat-pine sticks were round and were called zaquitoc, which is the pine of Xibalba. Their fat-pine sticks were pointed and filed and were as bright as bone; the pine of Xibalba was very hard.

Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú entered the House of Gloom. There they were given their fat-pine sticks, a single lighted stick which Hun-Caméé and Vucub-Caméé sent them, together with a lighted cigar for each of them which the lords had sent. They went to give them to Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú.

They found them crouching in the darkness when the porters arrived with the fat-pine sticks and the cigars. As they entered, the pine sticks lighted the place brightly.

"Each of you light your pine sticks and your cigars; come and bring them back at dawn, you must not burn them up, but you must return them whole; this is what the lords told us to say." So they said. And so they were defeated. They burned up the pine sticks, and they also finished the cigars which had been given to them.

There were many punishments in Xibalba; the punishments were of many kinds.

The first was the House of Gloom, Quequma-ha, in which there was only darkness.

The second was Xuxulim-ha, the house where everybody shivered, in which it was very cold. A cold, unbearable wind blew within.

The third was the House of Jaguars, Balami-ha, it was called, in which there were nothing but jaguars which stalked about, jumped around, roared, and made fun. The jaguars were shut up in the house.

Zotzi-háá, the House of Bats, the fourth place of punishment was called. Within this house there were nothing but bats which squeaked and cried and flew around and around. The bats were shut in and could not get out.

The fifth was called Chayim-háá, the House of Knives, in which there were only sharp, pointed knives, silent or grating against each other in the house.

There were many places of torture in Xibalba, but Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú did not enter them. We only mention the names of these houses of punishment.

When Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú came before Hun-Caméeé and Vucub-Caméeé, they said:

"Where are my cigars? Where are my sticks of fat pine which I gave you last night?"

"They are all gone, Sir."

"Well. Today shall be the end of your days. Now you shall die. You shall be destroyed, we will break you into pieces and here your faces will stay hidden. You shall be sacrificed," said Hun-Caméeé and Vucub-Caméeé.

They sacrificed them immediately and buried them in the Pucbal-Chah, as it was called. Before burying them, they cut off the head of Hun-Hunahpúú and buried the older brother together with the younger brother.

"Take the head and put it in that tree which is planted on the road," said Hun-Caméeé and Vucub-Caméeé.

And having put the head in the tree, instantly the tree, which had never borne fruit before the head of Hun-Hunahpúú was placed among its branches, was covered with fruit. And this calabash tree, it is said, is the one which we now call the head of Hun-Hunahpúú.

Hun-Caméeé and Vucub-Caméeé looked in amazement at the fruit on the tree. The round fruit was everywhere; but they did not recognize the head of Hun-Hunahpúú; it was exactly like the other fruit of the calabash tree. So it seemed to all of the people of Xibalba when they came to look at it.

According to their judgment, the tree was miraculous, because of what had instantly occurred when they put Hun-Hunahpúú's head among its branches. And the Lords of Xibalba said:

"Let no one come to pick this fruit. Let no one come and sit under this tree!" they said, and so the Lords of Xibalba resolved to keep everybody away.

The head of Hun-Hunahpúú did not appear again, because it had become one and the same as the fruit of the gourd tree. Nevertheless, a girl heard the wonderful story. Now we shall tell about her arrival.

Chapter 3

This is the story of a maiden, the daughter of a lord named Cuchumaquic.

A maiden, then, daughter of a lord heard this story. The name of the father was Cuchumaquic and that of the maiden was Xquic. When she heard the story of the fruit of the tree which her father told, she was amazed to hear it.

"Why can I not go to see this tree which they tell about?" the girl exclaimed. "Surely the fruit of which I hear tell must be very good." Finally she went alone and arrived at the foot of the tree which was planted in Pucbal-Chah.

"Ah! " she exclaimed. "What fruit is this which this tree bears? Is it not wonderful to see how it is covered with fruit? Must I die, shall I be lost, if I pick one of this fruit?" said the maiden.

Then the skull which was among the branches of the tree spoke up and said: "What is it you wish? Those round objects which cover the branches of the trees are nothing but skulls." So spoke the head of Hun-Hunahpúú turning to the maiden. "Do you, perchance, want them?" it added.

"Yes, I want them," the maiden answered.

"Very well," said the skull. "Stretch your right hand up

"Very well," said the maiden, and with her right hand reached toward the skull.

In that instant the skull let a few drops of spittle fall directly into the maiden's palm. She looked quickly and intently at the palm of her hand, but the spittle of the skull was not there.

"In my saliva and spittle I have given you my descendants," said the voice in the tree. "Now my head has nothing on it any more, it is nothing but a skull without flesh. So are the heads of the great princes, the flesh is all which gives them a handsome appearance. And when they die, men are frightened by their bones. So, too, is the nature of the sons, which are like saliva and spittle, they may be sons of a lord, of a wise man, or of an orator. They do not lose their substance when they go, but they bequeath it; the image of the lord, of the wise man, or of the orator does not disappear, nor is it lost, but he leaves it to the daughters and to the sons which he begets. I have done the same with you. Go up, then, to the surface of the earth, that you may not die. Believe in my words that it will be so," said the head of Hun-Hunahpúú and of Vucub-Hunahpúú.

And all that they did together was by order of Huracáán, Chipi-Caculháá, and Raxa-Caculháá.

After all of the above talking, the maiden returned directly to her home, having immediately conceived the sons in her belly by virtue of the spittle only. And thus Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé were begotten.

And so the girl returned home, and after six months had passed, her father, who was called Cuchumaquic, noticed her condition. At once the maiden's secret was discovered by her father when he observed that she was pregnant.

Then the lords, Hun-Caméé and Vucub-Caméé, held council with Cuchumaquic.

"My daughter is pregnant, Sirs; she has been disgraced," exclaimed Cuchumaquic when he appeared before the lords.

"Very well," they said. "Command her to tell the truth, and if she refuses to speak, punish her; let her be taken far from here and sacrifice her."

"Very well, Honorable Lords," he answered. Then he questioned his daughter:

"Whose are the children that you carry, my daughter," And she answered, "I have no child, my father, for I have not yet known a youth."

"Very well," he replied. "You are really a whore. Take her and sacrifice her, Ahpop Achih; bring me her heart in a gourd and return this very day before the lords," he said to the two owls.

The four messengers took the gourd and set out carrying the young girl in their arms and also taking the knife of flint with which to sacrifice her.

And she said to them: "It cannot be that you will kill me, oh, messengers, because what I bear in my belly is no disgrace, but was begotten when I went to marvel at the head of Hun-Hunahpúú which was in Pucbal-Chah. So, then, you must not sacrifice me, oh, messengers!" said the young girl, turning to them.

"And what shall we put in place of your heart? Your father told us: 'Bring the heart, return before the lords, do your duty, all working together, bring it in the gourd quickly and put the heart in the bottom of the gourd.' Perchance, did he not speak to us so? What shall we put in the gourd? We wish too, that you should not die," said the messengers.

"Very well, but my heart does not belong to them. Neither is your home here, nor must you let them force you to kill men. Later, in truth, the real criminals will be at your mercy and I will overcome Hun-Caméé and Vucub-Caméé. So, then,, the blood and only the blood shall be theirs and shall be given to them. Neither shall my heart be burned before them. Gather the product of this tree," said the maiden.

The red sap gushing forth from the tree fell in the gourd and with it they made a ball which glistened and took the shape of a heart. The tree gave forth sap similar to blood, with the appearance of real blood.

Then the blood, or that is to say the sap of the red tree, clotted, and formed a very bright coating inside the gourd, like clotted blood; meanwhile the tree glowed at the work of the maiden. It was called the "red tree of cochineal, but [since then] it has taken the name of Blood Tree because its sap is called Blood.

"There on earth you shall be beloved and you shall have all that belongs to you," said the maiden to the owls.

"Very well, girl. We shall go there, we go up to serve you; you, continue on your way, while we go to present the sap, instead of your heart, to the lords," said the messengers.

When they arrived in the presence of the lords, all were waiting.

"You have finished?" asked Hun-Caméé.

"All is finished, my lords. Here in the bottom of the gourd is the heart."

"Very well. Let us see," exclaimed Hun-Caméé. And grasping it with his fingers he raised it, the shell broke and the blood flowed bright red in color.

"Stir up the fire and put it on the coals," said Hun-Camée.

As soon as they threw it on the fire, the men of Xibalba began to sniff and drawing near to it, they found the fragrance of the heart very sweet.

And as they sat deep in thought, the owls, the maiden's servants, left, and flew like a flock of birds from the abyss toward earth and the four became her servants.

In this manner the Lords of Xibalba were defeated. All were tricked by the maiden.

Chapter 4

Well then, Hunbatz and Hunchouéen were with their mothers when the woman called Xquic arrived.

When the woman Xquic came before the mother of Hunbatz and Hunchouéen, she carried her sons in her belly and it was not long before Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé, as they were called, were to be born.

When the woman came to the old lady, she said to her: "I have come, mother; I am your daughter-in-law and your daughter, mother." She said this when she entered the grandmother's house.

"Where did you come from? Where are my sons? Did they, perchance, not die in Xibalba? Do you not see these two who remain, their descendants and blood, and are called Hunbatz and Hunchouéen? Go from here! Get out!" the old lady screamed at the girl.

"Nevertheless, it is true that I am your daughter-in-law; I have been for a long time. I belong to Hun-Hunahpúú. They live in what I carry, Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú are not dead; they will return to show themselves clearly, my mother-in-law. And you shall soon see their image in what I bring to you," she said to the old woman.

Then Hunbatz and Hunchouéen became angry. They did nothing but play the flute and sing, paint, and sculpture all day long and were the consolation of the old woman.

Then the old woman said:

"I do not wish you to be my daughter-in-law, because what you bear in your womb is fruit of your disgrace. Furthermore, you are an impostor; my sons of whom you speak are already dead."

Presently the grandmother added: "This, that I tell you is the truth; but well, it is all right, you are my daughter-in-law, according to what I have heard. Go, then, bring the food for those who must be fed. Go and gather a large net [full of corn] and return at once, since you are my daughter-in-law, according to what I hear," she said to the girl.

"Very well," the girl replied, and she went at once to the cornfield which Hunbatz and Hunchouéen had planted. They had opened the road and the girl took it and so came to the cornfield; but she found only one stalk of corn; there were not two or three, and when she saw that there was only one stalk with an ear on it, the girl became very anxious.

"Ah, sinner that I am, unfortunate me! Where must I go to get a net full of corn as she told me to do?" she exclaimed. Immediately she began to beg Chahal for the food which she had to get and must take back.

"Xtoh, Xcanil, Xcacao, you who cook the corn; and you, Chahal, guardian of the food of Hunbatz and Hunchouéen!" said the girl. And then she seized the beards, the red silk of the ears of corn and pulled them off without picking the ear. Then she arranged the silk in the net like ears of corn and the large net was completely filled.

The girl returned immediately; the animals of the field went along carrying the net, and when they arrived, they went to put the load in a corner of the house, as though she might have carried it. The old woman came and when she saw the corn in the large net she exclaimed:

"Where have you brought all this corn from? Did you, perchance, take all the corn in our field and bring it all in? I shall go at once to see," said the old woman, and she set out on the road to the cornfield. But the one stalk of corn was still standing there, and she saw too where the net had been at the foot of the stalk. The old woman quickly returned to her house and said to the girl:

"This is proof enough that you are really my daughter-in-law. I shall now see your little ones, those whom you carry and who also are to be soothsayers," she said to the girl.

Chapter 5

Now we shall tell of the birth of Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé. Here, then, we shall tell about their birth.

When the day of their birth arrived, the girl named Xquic gave birth; but the grandmother did not see them when they were born. Instantly the two boys called Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé were born. There in the wood they were born.

Then they came to the house, but they could not sleep.

"Go throw them out!" said the old woman, "because truly they cry very much." Then they went and put them on an anthill. There they slept peacefully. Then they took them from the ant-hill and laid them on thistles.

Now, what Hunbatz and Hunchouéén wished was that they [Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé] would die there on the ant-hill, or on the thistles. They wished this because of the hatred and envy Hunbatz and Hunchouéén felt for them.

At first they refused to receive their younger brothers in the house; they would not recognize them and so they were brought up in the fields.

Hunbatz and Hunchouéén were great musicians and singers; they had grown up in the midst of trials and want and they had had much trouble, but they became very wise. They were flautists, singers, painters, and carvers; all of this they knew how to do.

They had heard about their birth and knew also that they were the successors of their parents, those who went to Xibalba and died there. Hunbatz and Hunchouéén were diviners, and in their hearts they knew everything concerning the birth of their two younger brothers. Nevertheless, because they were envious, they did not show their wisdom, and their hearts were filled with bad will for them, although Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé had not offended them in any way.

These two [last] did nothing all day long but shoot their blowguns; they were not loved by their grandmother, nor by Hunbatz, nor by Hunchouéén; they were given nothing to eat; only when the meal was ended and Hunbatz and Hunchouéén had already eaten, then the younger brothers came to eat. But they did not become angry, nor did they become vexed, but suffered silently, because they knew their rank, and they understood everything clearly. They brought their birds when they came, and Hunbatz and Hunchouéén ate them without giving anything to either of the two, Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé.

The only thing that Hunbatz and Hunchouéén did was to play the flute and sing.

And once when Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé came without bringing any bird at all, they went into the house and their grandmother became furious.

"Why did you bring no birds?" she said to Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé.

And they answered: "What happened, grandmother, is that our birds were caught in the tree and we could not climb up to get them, dear grandmother. If our elder brothers so wish, let them come with us to bring the birds down," they said.

"Very well," the older brothers answered, "we shall go with you at dawn."

The two younger brothers then discussed the way to overcome Hunbatz and Hunchouéén. "We shall only change their nature, their appearance; and so let our word be fulfilled, for all the suffering that they have caused us. They wanted us to die, that we might be lost, we, their younger brothers. In their hearts they really believe that we have come to be their servants. For these reasons we shall overcome them and teach them a lesson." Thus they spoke.

Then they went toward the foot of the tree called Cantéé. They were accompanied by their two elder brothers and they were shooting their blowguns. It was not possible to count the birds which sang in the tree, and their elder brothers marveled to see so many birds. There were birds, but not one fell at the foot of the tree.

"Our birds do not fall to the ground. Go and fetch them down," they said to their elder brothers.

"Very well," the latter answered. And then they climbed the tree; but the tree became larger and the trunk swelled. Then Hunbatz and Hunchouéén wanted to come down but they could not come down from the top of the tree.

Then they called from the treetop. "What has happened to us, our brothers? Unfortunate we. This tree frightens us only to look at it. Oh, our brothers!" they called from the treetop. And Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé answered: "Loosen your breechcloths; tie them below your stomach, leaving the long ends hanging and pull these from behind, and in this way you can walk easily." Thus said the younger brothers. "Very well," they answered, pulling the ends of their belts back, but instantly these were changed into tails and they took on the appearance of monkeys. Then they hopped over the branches of the trees, among the great woods and little woods, and they buried themselves in the forest, making faces and swinging in the branches of the trees.

In this way Hunbatz and Hunchouéén were overcome by Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé; and only because of their magic could they have done it.

Then they returned to their home, and when they arrived they spoke to their grandmother and their mother, and said to them: "What could it be, grandmother, that has happened to our elder brothers, that suddenly their faces turned into the faces of animals?" So they said.

"If you have done any harm to your elder brothers, you have hurt me and have filled me with sadness. Do not do such a thing to your brothers, oh, my children," said the old woman to Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé. And they replied to their grandmother:

"Do not grieve, our grandmother. You shall see our brothers' faces again; they shall return, but it will be a difficult trial for you, grandmother. Be careful that you do not laugh at them. And now, let us cast our lot," they said.

Immediately they began to play their flutes, playing the song of Hunahpúú-Qoy. Then they sang, playing the flute and drum, picking up their flutes and their drum. Afterward they sat down close to their grandmother and continued playing and calling back [their brothers] with music and song, intoning the song, called Hunahpúú-Qoy.

At last, Hunbatz and Hunchouéen came and began to dance; but when the old woman saw their ugly faces, she began to laugh, unable to control her laughter, and they went away at once and she did not see their faces again.

"Now you see, grandmother! They have gone to the forest. What have you done, grandmother of ours? We may make this trial but four times and only three are left. Let us call them [back again] with flute and with song, but you, try to control your laughter. Let the trial begin!" said Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé. Immediately they began again to play. Hunbatz and Hunchouéen returned dancing, and came as far as the center of the court of the house grimacing and provoking their grandmother to laughter, until finally she broke into loud laughter. They were really very amusing with their monkey-faces, their broad bottoms, their narrow tails, and the hole of their stomach, all of which made the old woman laugh.

Again the [elder brothers] went back to the woods. And Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé said: "And now what shall we do, little grandmother? We shall try once again, this third time."

They played the flute again, and the monkeys returned dancing. The grandmother contained her laughter. Then they went up over the kitchen; their eyes gave off a red light; they drew away and scrubbed their noses and frightened each other with the faces they made.

And as the grandmother saw all of this, she burst into violent laughter; and they did not see the faces [of the elder brothers] again because of the old woman's laughter.

"Only once more shall we call them, grandmother, so that they shall come for the fourth time," said the boys. They began again, then, to play the flute, but [their brothers] did not return the fourth time, instead they fled into the forest as quickly as they could.

The boys said to their grandmother: "We have done everything possible, dear grandmother; they came once, then we tried to call them again. But do not grieve; here we are, your grandchildren; you must look to us, oh, our mother! Oh, our grandmother! to remind you of our elder brothers, those who were called and have the names of Hunbatz and Hunchouéen," said Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé.

They were invoked by the musicians and singers, and by the old people. The painters and craftsmen also invoked them in days gone by. But they were changed into animals and became monkeys because they became arrogant and abused their brothers.

In this way they were disgraced; this was their loss; in this way Hunbatz and Hunchouéen were overcome and became animals. They had always lived in their home; they were musicians and singers and also did great things when they lived with their grandmother and with their mother.

Chapter 6

Then they [Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé] began to work, in order to be well thought of by their grandmother and their mother. The first thing they made was the cornfield. "We are going to plant the cornfield, grandmother and mother," they said. "Do not grieve; here we are, your grandchildren, we who shall take the place of our brothers," said Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé.

At once they took their axes, their picks, and their wooden hoes and went, each carrying his blowgun on his shoulder. As they left the house they asked their grandmother to bring them their midday meal.

"At midday, come and bring our food, grandmother," they said.

"Very well, my grandsons," the old woman replied.

Soon they came to the field. And as they plunged the pick into the earth, it worked the earth; it did the work alone.

In the same way they put the ax in the trunks of the trees and in the branches, and instantly they fell and all the trees and vines were lying on the ground. The trees fell quickly, with only one stroke of the ax.

The pick also dug a great deal. One could not count the thistles and brambles which had been felled with one blow of the pick. Neither was it possible to tell what it had dug and broken up, in all the large and

small woods.

And having taught an animal, called Xmucur, they had it climb to the top of a large tree and Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé said to it: "Watch for our grandmother to come with our food, and as soon as she comes, begin at once to sing, and we shall seize the pick and the ax."

"Very well," Xmucur answered.

And they began to shoot with their blowguns; certainly they did none of the work of clearing and cultivating. A little later, the dove sang, and they ran quickly, grabbing the pick and ax. And one of them covered his head and also deliberately covered his hands with earth and in the same way smeared his face to look like a real laborer, and the other purposely threw splinters of wood over his head as though he really had been cutting the trees.

Thus their grandmother saw them. They ate at once, but they had not really done the work of tilling the soil, and without deserving it they were given their midday meal. After a while, they went home.

"We are really tired, grandmother," they said upon arriving, stretching their legs and arms before her, but without reason.

They returned the following day, and upon arriving at the field, they found that all the trees and vines were standing again and that the brambles and thistles had become entangled again.

"Who has played this trick on us?" they said. "No doubt all the small and large animals did it, the puma, the jaguar, the deer, the rabbit, the mountain-cat, the coyote, the wild boar, the coati, the small birds, the large birds; they, it was, who did it; in a single night, they did it."

They began again to prepare the field and to prepare the soil and cut the trees. They talked over what they would have to do with the trees which they had cut, and the weeds which they had pulled up.

"Now we shall watch over our cornfield; perhaps we can surprise those who come to do all of this damage," they said, talking it over together. And later they returned home.

"What do you think of it, grandmother? They have made fun of us. Our field, which we had worked, has been turned into a field of stubble and a thick woods. Thus we found it, when we got there, a little while ago, grandmother," they said to her and to their mother. "But we shall return there and watch over it, because it is not right that they do such things to us," they said.

Then they dressed and returned at once to their field of cut trees, and there they hid themselves, stealthily, in the darkness.

Then all the animals gathered again; one of each kind came with the other small and large animals. It was just midnight when they came, all talking as they came, saying in their own language: "Rise up, trees! Rise up, vines!"

So they spoke when they came and gathered under the trees, under the vines, and they came closer until they appeared before the eyes [of Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé].

The puma and the jaguar were the first, and [Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé] wanted to seize them, but [the animals] did not let them. Then the deer and the rabbit came close, and the only parts of them which they could seize were their tails, only these, they pulled out. The tail of the deer remained in their hands, and for this reason the deer and the rabbit have short tails.

Neither the mountain-cat, the coyote, the wild boar, nor the coati fell into their hands. All the animals passed before Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé, who were furious because they could not catch them.

But, finally, another animal came hopping along, and this one which was the rat, [which] they seized instantly, and wrapped him in a cloth. Then when they had caught him, they squeezed his head and tried to choke him, and they burned his tail in the fire, and for that reason the rat's tail has no hair. So, too, the boys, Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé, tried to poke at his eyes.

The rat said: "I must not die at your hands. And neither is it your business to plant the cornfield."

"What are you telling us now?" the boys asked the rat.

"Loosen me a little, for I have something which I wish to tell you, and I shall tell you immediately, but first give me something to eat," said the rat.

"We will give you food afterward, but first speak," they answered.

"Very well. Do you know, then, that the property of your parents Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú, as they were called, those who died in Xibalba, or rather the gear with which they played ball, has remained and is hanging from the roof of the house: the ring, the gloves, and the ball? Nevertheless, your grandmother does not want to show them to you for it was on account of these things that your parents died."

"Are you sure of that?" said the boys to the rat. And they were very happy when they heard about the rubber ball. And as the rat had now talked, they showed the rat what his food would be.

"This shall be your food: corn, chili-seeds, beans, pataxte, cacao; all this belongs to you, and should there be anything stored away or forgotten, it shall be yours also. Eat it," Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé said to the rat.

"Wonderful, boys," he said; "but what shall I tell your grandmother if she sees me?"

"Do not worry, because we are here and shall know what to say to our grandmother. Let us go! We shall go quickly to the corner of the house, go at once to where the things hang; we shall be looking at the garret of the house and paying attention to our food," they said to the rat.

And having arranged it thus, during the night after talking together, Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé arrived at midday. When they arrived, they brought the rat with them, but they did not show it; one of them went directly into the house, and the other went to the corner and there let the rat climb up quickly.

Immediately they asked their grandmother for food. "Prepare our food, we wish a chili-sauce, grandmother," they said. And at once the food was prepared for them and a plate of broth was put before them.

But this was only to deceive their grandmother and their mother. And having dried up the water which was in the water jar, they said, "We are really dying of thirst; go and bring us a drink," they said to their grandmother.

"Good," she said and went. Then they began to eat, but they were not really hungry; it was only a trick.

They saw then by means of their plate of chile how the rat went rapidly toward the ball which was suspended from the roof of the house. On seeing this in their chile-sauce, they sent to the river a certain xan, an animal called xan, which is like a mosquito, to puncture the side of their grandmother's water jar, and although she tried to stop the water which ran out, she could not close the hole made in the jar.

"What is the matter with our grandmother? Our mouths are dry with thirsty, we are dying of thirst," they said to their mother and they sent her out. Immediately the rat went to cut [the cord which held] the ball and it fell from the garret of the house together with the ring and the gloves and the leather pads. The boys seized them and ran quickly to hide them on the road which led to the ball-court.

After this they went to the river to join their grandmother and their mother, who were busily trying to stop the hole in the water jar. And arriving with their blowgun, they said when they came to the river: "What are you doing? We got tired [of waiting] and we came," they said.

"Look at the hole in my jar which I cannot stop," said the grandmother. Instantly they stopped it, and together they returned, the two walking before their grandmother. And in this way the ball was found.

Chapter 7

The boys returned happily to the ball-court to play; they were playing alone a long time and cleared the court where their parents had played.

And the Lords of Xibalba, hearing them, said: "Who are they who play again over our heads and disturb us with the noise they make? Perchance Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú did not die, those who wished to exalt themselves before us? Go at once and call them!"

So said Hun-Caméé, Vucub-Caméé, and all the lords. And sending the messengers to call them, they said to them: "Go and tell them when you get there: 'Let them come,' the lords have said; we wish to play ball with them here, within seven days we wish to play; tell them so when you arrive," thus said the lords. This was the command which they gave to the messengers. And they came then by the wide road which the boys had made that led directly to their house; by it the messengers arrived directly before [the boy's] grandmother. They were eating when the messengers from Xibalba arrived.

"Tell them to come, without fail, the lords commanded," said the messengers of Xibalba. And the messengers of Xibalba indicated the day: "Within seven days they will await them," they said to Xmucanéé.

"It is well, messengers; they will go," the old woman answered. And the messengers set out on their return.

Then the old woman's heart was filled with anxiety. "Whom shall I send to call my grandchildren? Was it not in this same way that the messengers of Xibalba came before, when they came to take the [boys'] parents?" said the grandmother, entering her house, alone and grieving.

And immediately a louse fell into her lap. She seized it and put it in the palm of her hand, and the louse wriggled and began to walk.

"My child, would you like that I sent you away to call my grandchildren from the ball-court?" she said to the louse. " 'Messengers have come to your grandmother,' tell them; come within seven days, tell them to come, said the messengers of Xibalba; thus your grandmother told me to say," thus she told the louse.

At once the louse swaggered off. Sitting on the road was a boy called Tamazul, or the toad.

"Where are you going? " the toad said to the louse.

"I am carrying a message in my stomach, I go to find the boys," said the louse to Tamazul.

"Very well, but I see that you do not go quickly," said the toad to the louse. "Do you not want me to swallow you? You shall see how I run, and so we shall arrive quickly."

"Very well," the louse said to the toad. Immediately the toad swallowed him. And the toad walked a long time, but without hurrying. Soon he met a large snake, called Zaquicaz.

"Where are you going, young Tamazul?" said Zaquicaz to the toad.

"I go as a messenger; I carry a message in my stomach," said the toad to the snake.

"I see that you do not walk quickly. Would I not arrive sooner? " the snake said to the toad. "Come here," he said. At once Zaquicaz swallowed the toad. And from then on this was the food of snakes, who still today swallow toads.

The snake went quickly and having met Vac, which is a very large bird, the hawk, [the latter] instantly swallowed the snake. Shortly afterward it arrived at the ball-court. From that time, this has been the food of hawks, who devour snakes in the fields.

And upon arrival, the hawk perched upon the cornice of the ball-court where Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé were amusing themselves playing ball. Upon arriving, the hawk began to cry: "Vac-co! Vac-co!" it said cawing. ["Here is the hawk! Here is the hawk!"]

"Who is screaming? Bring our blowguns!" the boys exclaimed. And shooting at the hawk, they aimed a pellet at the pupil of the eyes and [the hawk] spiraled to the ground. They ran to seize it and asked: "What do you come to do here?" they asked the hawk.

"I bring a message in my stomach. First cure my eye and afterward I shall tell you," the hawk answered.

"Very well," they said, and taking a bit of the rubber of the ball with which they were playing, they put it in the hawk's eye. Lotzquic they called it, and instantly the hawk's eye was perfectly healed.

"Speak, then," they said to the hawk. And immediately it vomited a large snake.

"Speak, thou," they said to the snake.

"Good," the[snake] said and vomited the toad.

"Where is the message that you bring?" they asked the toad.

"Here in my stomach is the message," answered the toad. And immediately he tried, but could not vomit; his mouth only filled with spittle but he did not vomit. The boys wanted to hit him then.

"You are a liar," they said, kicking him in the rump, and the bone of the haunches gave way. He tried again, but his mouth only filled with spittle. Then the boys opened the toad's mouth and once open, they looked inside of it. The louse was stuck to the toad's teeth; it had stayed in its mouth and had not been swallowed, but only pretended to be swallowed. Thus the toad was tricked, and the kind of food to give it is not known. It cannot run; and it became the food of the snakes.

"Speak," they said to the louse, and then it gave its message. "Your grandmother has said, boys: 'Go call them; the messengers of Hun-Camée and Vucub-Camée have come to tell them to go to Xibalba, saying: 'They must come here within seven days to play ball with us, and they must also bring their playing gear, the ball, the rings, the gloves, the leather pads, in order that they may amuse themselves here,' said the lords. They have really come,' said your grandmother. That is why I have come. For truly your grandmother said this and she cries and grieves, for this reason I have come."

"Is it true?" the boys asked themselves when they heard this. And running quickly they arrived at their grandmother's side; they went only to take their leave of her.

"We are going, grandmother, we came only to say good-bye. But here will be the sign which we shall leave of our fate: each of us shall plant a reed, in the middle of the house we shall plant it; if it dries, this shall be the sign of our death. 'They are dead!' you shall say, if it begins to dry up. But if it sprouts again: 'They are living!' you shall say, oh, our grandmother. And you, mother, do not weep, for here we leave the sign of our fate," thus they said.

And before going, Hunahpúú planted one [reed] and Xbalanquéé planted another; they planted them in the house and not in the field, nor did they plant them in moist soil, but in dry soil; in the middle of their house, they left them planted.

Chapter 8

Then they went, each one carrying his blowgun, and went down in the direction of Xibalba. They descended the steps quickly and passed between several streams and ravines. They passed among some birds and these birds were called Molay.

They also passed over a river of corruption, and over a river of blood, where they would be destroyed, so the people of Xibalba thought; but they did not touch it with their feet, instead they crossed it on their blowguns.

They went on from there, and came to a crossway of four roads. They knew very well which were the roads to Xibalba; the black road, the white road, the red road, and the green road. So, then, they sent an animal called Xan. It was to go to gather information which they wanted. Sting them, one by one; first sting the one seated in the first place and then sting all of them, since this is the part you must play: to suck the blood of the men on the roads," they said to the mosquito.

"Very well," answered the mosquito. And immediately it flew on to the dark road and went directly toward the wooden men which were seated first and covered with ornaments. It stung the first, but this one said nothing; then it stung the next one, it stung the second, who was seated, but this one said nothing, either. After that it stung the third; the third of those seated was Hun-Camée. "Ah!" he exclaimed when it stung him. "What is this, Hun-Camée? What is it that has stung you? Do you not know who has stung you?" said the fourth one of the lords, who were seated.

"What is the matter, Vucub-Camée? What has stung you?" said the fifth.

"Ah! Ah!" then said Xiquiripat. And Vucub-Camée asked him, "What has stung you?" and when they stung the sixth who was seated [he cried], "Ah!"

"What is this, Cuchumaquic?" asked Xiquiripat. "What is it that has stung you?" And the seventh one seated said "Ah" when he was stung.

"What is the matter, Ahalpuh?" said Chuchumaquic. "What has stung you?" And when it stung him, the eighth of those seated said, "Ah!"

"What is the matter, Ahalcanáá?" said Ahalpuh. "What has stung you?" And when he was stung the ninth of those seated said, "Ah!"

"What is this, Chamiabac?" said Ahalcanáá. "What has stung you?" And when the tenth of those seated was stung, he said "Ah!"

"What is the matter, Chamiaholom?" said Chamiabac. "What has stung you?" And when the eleventh of those seated was stung he said, "Ah!"

"What happened?" said Chamiaholom. "What has stung you?" And when the twelfth of those seated was stung, he said "Alas! "

"What is this, Patáán?" they said. "What has stung you?" And the thirteenth of those seated said "Alas!" when he was stung.

"What is the matter, Quicxic?" said Patáán. "What has stung you?" And the fourteenth of those seated when he was stung said, "Alas!"

"What has stung you, Quicrixcac?" said Quicréé.

In this way they told their names, as they all said them one to the other. So they made themselves known by telling their names, calling each chief, one by one. And in this manner each of those seated in his corner told his name.

Not a single one of the names was missed. All told their names when Hunahpúú pulled out a hair of his leg, which was what had stung them. It was really not a mosquito which stung them which went for Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé to hear the names of all of them.

They [the youths] continued on their way and arrived where the Lords of Xibalba were.

"Greet the lord, the one who is seated," said one in order to deceive them.

"That is not a lord. It is nothing more than a wooden figure," they said, and went on. Immediately they began to greet them:

"Hail, Hun-Camée! Hail, Vucub-Camée! Hail, Xiquiripat! Hail, Cuchumaquic! Hail, Ahalpuh! Hail, Ahalcanáá! Hail, Chamiabac! Hail, Chamiaholom! Hail, Quicxic! Hail, Patáán! Hail, Quicréé! Hail, Quicrixcac!" they said coming before them. And looking in their faces, they spoke the name of all, without missing the name of a single one of them.

But what the lords wished was that they should not discover their names.

"Sit here," they said, hoping that they would sit in the seat [which they indicated].

"That is not a seat for us; it is only a hot stone," said Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé, and they [the Lords of Xibalba] could not overcome them.

"Very well, go to that house," the lords said. And they [the youths] went on and entered the House of Gloom. And neither there were they overcome.

Chapter 9

This was the first test of Xibalba. The Lords of Xibalba thought that [the boys'] entrance there would be the beginning of their downfall. After a while [the boys] entered the House of Gloom; immediately lighted sticks of fat pine were given them and the messengers of Hun-Caméé also took a cigar to each one.

"These are their pine sticks," said the lord; "they must return them at dawn, tomorrow, together with the cigars, and you must bring them back whole," said the lord." So said the messengers when they arrived. "Very well," [the boys] replied. But they really did not [light] the sticks of pine, instead they put a red-colored thing in place of them, or some feathers from the tail of the macaw, which to the night watches looked like lighted pine sticks. And as for the cigars, they attached fireflies to their end.

All night [everybody] thought they were defeated. "They are lost," said the night watchmen. But the pine sticks had not been burned and looked the same, and the cigars had not been lighted and looked the same as before.

They went to tell the lords.

"How is this? Whence have they come? Who conceived them? Who gave birth to them? This really troubles us, because it is not well what they do. Their faces are strange, and strange is their conduct," they said to each other.

Soon all the lords summoned [the boys].

"Eh! Let us play ball, boys!" they said. At the same time they were questioned by Hun-Caméé and Vucub-Caméé:

"Where did you come from? Tell us, boys!" said the Lords of Xibalba.

"Who knows whence we came! We do not know," they said, and nothing more.

"Very well. Let us play ball, boys," said the Lords of Xibalba.

"Good," they replied.

"We shall use our ball," said the Lords of Xibalba.

"By no means, shall you use [your ball], but ours," the boys answered.

"Not that one, but ours we shall use," insisted the Lords of Xibalba.

"Very well," said the boys.

"Let us play for a worm, the chil," said the Lords of Xibalba.

"No, but instead, the head of the puma shall speak," said the boys.

"Not that," said those of Xibalba.

"Very well," said Hunahpúú.

Then the Lords of Xibalba seized the ball; they threw it directly at the ring of Hunahpúú. Immediately, while those of Xibalba grasped the handle of the knife of flint, the ball rebounded and bounced all around the floor of the ball-court.

"What is this?" exclaimed Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé. "You wish to kill us? Perchance you did not send to call us? And your own messengers did not come? In truth, unfortunate are we! We shall leave at once," the boys said to them.

This was exactly what those of Xibalba wanted to have happen to the boys, that they would die immediately, right there in the ball-court and thus they would be overcome. But it did not happen thus, and it was the Lords of Xibalba who were defeated by the boys.

"Do not leave, boys, let us go on playing ball, but we shall use your ball," they said to the boys.

"Very well," the boys answered and then they drove their balls through [the ring of Xibalba], and with this the game ended.

And offended by their defeat, the men of Xibalba immediately said: "What shall we do in order to overcome them?" And turning to the boys they said to them: "Go gather and bring us, early tomorrow morning, four gourds of flowers." So said the men of Xibalba to the boys.

"Very well. And what kind of flowers?" they asked the men of Xibalba.

"A branch of red chipilin, a branch of white chipilin, a branch of yellow chipilin, and a branch of carinimac," said the men of Xibalba.

"Very well," replied the boys.

Thus the talk ended; equally strong and vigorous were the words of the boys. And their hearts were calm when they gave themselves up to be overcome.

The Lords of Xibalba were happy, thinking that they had already defeated them.

"This has turned out well for us. First they must cut them [the flowers], said the Lords of Xibalba. "Where shall they go to get the flowers?" they said to themselves.

"Surely you will give us our flowers tomorrow early; go, then, to cut them, the Lords of Xibalba said to

Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé.

"Very well," they replied. "At dawn we shall play ball again," they said upon leaving.

And immediately the boys entered the House of Knives, the second place of torture in Xibalba. And what the lords wanted was that they would be cut to pieces by the knives, and would be quickly killed; that is what they wished in their hearts.

But the [boys] did not die. They spoke at once to the knives and said to them:

"Yours shall be the flesh of all the animals," they said to the knives. And they did not move again, but all the knives were quiet.

Thus they passed the night in the House of Knives, and calling all the ants, they said to them: "Come, Cutting Ants, come, zompopos, and all of you go at once, go and bring all the kinds of flowers that we must cut for the lords."

"Very well," they said, and all the ants went to bring the flowers from the gardens of Hun-Caméeé and Vucub-Caméeé.

Previously [the lords] had warned the guards of the flowers of Xibalba: "Take care of our flowers, do not let them be taken by the boys who shall come to cut them. But how could [the boys] see and cut the flowers? Not at all. Watch, then, all night! "

"Very well," they answered. But the guards of the garden heard nothing. Needlessly they shouted up into the branches of the trees in the garden. There they were all night, repeating their same shouts and songs.

"Ixpurpuvec! Ixpurpuvec!" one shouted.

"Puhuyúú! Puhuyúú!" the other answered.

Puhuyúú was the name of the two who watched the garden of Hun-Caméeé and Vucub-Caméeé. But they did not notice the ants who were robbing them of what they were guarding, turning around and moving here and there, cutting the flowers, climbing the trees to cut the flowers, and gathering them from the ground at the foot of the trees.

Meanwhile the guards went on crying, and they did not feel the teeth which were cutting their tails and their wings.

And thus the ants carried, between their teeth, the flowers which they took down, and gathering them from the ground, they went on carrying them with their teeth.

Quickly they filled the four gourds with flowers, which were moist [with dew] when it dawned. Immediately the messengers arrived to get them. " 'Tell them to come,' the lord has said, 'and bring here instantly what they have cut,' " they said to the boys.

"Very well," the [boys] answered. And carrying the flowers in the four gourds, they went, and when they arrived before the lord [of Xibalba] and the other lords, it was lovely to see the flowers they had brought.

And in this way the Lords of Xibalba were overcome.

The boys had only sent the ants [to cut the flowers], and in a night the ants cut them and put them in the gourds.

Instantly the Lords of Xibalba paled and their faces became livid because of the flowers. They sent at once for the guardians of the flowers: "Why did you permit them to steal our flowers? These which we see here are our flowers," they said to the guardians.

"We noticed nothing, my lord. Our tails also suffered," they answered. And then the [lords] tore at their mouths as a punishment for having let that which was under their care be stolen.

Thus were Hun-Caméeé and Vucub-Caméeé defeated by Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé. And this was the beginning of their deeds. From that time the mouth of the owl is divided, cleft as it is today.

Immediately they went down to play ball, and also they played several tie-matches. Then they finished playing and agreed to play again the following day at dawn. So said the Lords of Xibalba.

"It is well," said the boys upon finishing.

Chapter 10

Afterward they entered the House of Cold. It is impossible to describe how cold it was. The house was full of hail; it was the mansion of cold. Soon, however, the cold was ended because with [a fire of] old logs the boys made the cold disappear.

That is why they did not die; they were still alive when it dawned. Surely what the Lords of Xibalba wanted was that they would die; but it was not thus, and when it dawned, they were still full of health, and they went out again, when the messengers came to get them.

"How is this? They are not dead yet?" said the Lords of Xibalba. They were amazed to see the deeds of Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé.

Presently the [boys] entered the House of Jaguars. The house was full of jaguars. "Do not bite us! Here is what belongs to you, [the boys] said to the jaguars. And quickly they threw some bones to the animals, which pounced upon the bones.

"Now surely they are finished. Now already they have eaten their own entrails. At last they have given themselves up. Now their bones have been broken," so said the guards, all happy because of this.

But they [the boys] did not die. As usual, well and healthy, they came out of the House of Jaguars.

"What kind of people are they? Where did they come from?" said all the Lords of Xibalba.

Presently they [the boys] entered into the midst of fire in the House of Fire, inside which there was only fire; but they were not burned. Only the coals and the wood burned. And, as usual, they were well when it dawned. But what they [the Lords of Xibalba] wished was that [the boys] would die rapidly, where they had been. Nevertheless, it did not happen thus, which disheartened the Lords of Xibalba.

Then they put them into the House of Bats. There was nothing but bats inside this house, the house of Camazotz, a large animal, whose weapons for killing were like a dry point, and instantly those who came into their presence perished.

They [the boys] were in there, then, but they slept inside their blowguns. And they were not bitten by those who were in the house. Nevertheless, one of them had to give up because of another Camazotz that came from the sky, and made him come into sight.

The bats were assembled in council all night, and flew about: "Quilitz, quilitz," they said: So they were saying all night. They stopped for a little while, however, and they did not move and were pressed against the end of one of the blowguns.

Then Xbalanquéé said to Hunahpúú: "Look you, has it begun already to get light?"

"Maybe so. I am going to see," [Hunahpúú] answered.

And as he wished very much to look out of the mouth of the blowgun, and wished to see if it had dawned, instantly Camazotz cut off his head and the body of Hunahpúú was decapitated.

Xbalanquéé asked again: "Has it not yet dawned?" But Hunahpúú did not move. "Where have you gone, Hunahpúú? What have you done?" But he did not move, and remained silent.

Then Xbalanquéé felt concerned and exclaimed: "Unfortunate are we. We are completely undone."

They went immediately to hang the head [of Hunahpúú] in the ball-court by special order of Hun-Caméé and Vucub-Caméé, and all the people of Xibalba rejoiced for what had happened to the head of Hunahpúú.

Chapter 11

Immediately he [Xbalanquéé] called all the animals, the coati, the wild boar, all the animals small and large, during the night, and at dawn he asked them what their food was.

"What does each of you eat? For I have called you so that you may choose your food," said Xbalanquéé to them.

"Very well," they answered. And immediately each went to take his [own food] and they all went together. Some went to take rotten things; others went to take grasses; others went to get stones. Others went to gather earth. Varied was the food of the [small] animals and of the large animals.

Behind them the turtle was lingering, it came waddling along to take its food. And reaching at the end [of Hunahpúú's body] it assumed the form of the head of Hunahpúú, and instantly the eyes were fashioned. Many soothsayers came, then, from heaven. The Heart of Heaven, Huracán, came to soar over the House of Bats.

It was not easy to finish making the face, but it turned out very well; the hair had a handsome appearance and [the head] could also speak.

But as it was about to dawn and the horizon reddened: "Make it dark again, old one!" the buzzard was told.

"Very well," said the old one, and instantly the old one darkened [the sky]. "Now the buzzard has darkened it," the people say nowadays.

And so, during the cool of dawn, the [Hunahpúú] began his existence.

"Will it be good?" they said. "Will it turn out to look like Hunahpúú?"

"It is very good," they answered. And really it seemed that the skull had changed itself back into a real head.

Then they [the two boys] talked among themselves and agreed: "Do not play ball; only pretend to play; I shall do everything alone," said Xbalanquéé.

At once he gave his orders to a rabbit: "Go and take your place over the ball-court; stay there within the

oak grove, the rabbit was told by Xbalanquéé; "when the ball comes to you, run out immediately, and I shall do the rest," the rabbit was told, when they gave him these instructions during the night. Presently day broke and the two boys were well and healthy. Then they went down to play ball. The head of Hunahpúú was suspended over the ball-court.

"We have triumphed! [said the Lords of Xibalba]. You worked your own destruction, you have delivered yourselves," they said. In this way they annoyed Hunahpúú.

"Hit his head with the ball," they said. But they did not bother him with it; he paid no attention to it.

Then the Lords of Xibalba threw out the ball. Xbalanquéé went out to get it; the ball was going straight to the ring, but it stopped, bounced, and passed quickly over the ball-court and with a jump went toward the oak grove.

Instantly the rabbit ran out and went hopping; and the Lords of Xibalba ran after it. They went, making noise and shouting after the rabbit. It ended by all of the Lords of Xibalba going.

At once Xbalanquéé took possession of the head of Hunahpúú; and taking the turtle he went to suspend it over the ball-court. And that head was actually the head of Hunahpúú and the two boys were very happy.

Those of Xibalba ran, then, to find the ball and having found it between the oaks, called them, saying:

"Come here. Here is the ball. We found it," they said, and they brought it.

When the Lords of Xibalba returned, they exclaimed, "What is this we see?"

Then they began to play again. Both of them tied.

Presently Xbalanquéé threw a stone at the turtle, which came to the ground and fell in the ball-court, breaking into a thousand pieces like seeds, before the lords.

"Who of you shall go to find it? Where is the one who shall go to bring it?" said the Lords of Xibalba.

And so were the Lords of Xibalba overcome by Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé. These two suffered great hardships, but they did not die despite all that was done to them.

Chapter 12

Here is the account of the death of Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé. Now we shall tell of the way they died. Having been forewarned of all the suffering which the [Lords of Xibalba] wished to impose upon them, they did not die of the tortures of Xibalba, nor were they overcome by all the fierce animals which were in Xibalba.

Afterward they sent for two soothsayers who were like prophets; they were called Xulúú and Pacam and were diviners, and they said unto them:

"You shall be questioned by the Lords of Xibalba about our deaths, for which they are planning and preparing because of the fact that we have not died, nor have they been able to overcome us, nor have we perished under their torments, nor have the animals attacked us. We have the presentiment in our hearts that they shall kill us by burning us. All the people of Xibalba have assembled, but the truth is, that we shall not die. Here, then, you have our instructions as to what you must say:

"If they should come to consult you about our death and that we may be sacrificed, what shall you say then, Xulúú and Pacam? If they ask you: 'Will it not be good to throw their bones into the ravine?' 'No, it would not be well,' tell them, 'because they would be brought to life again, afterward!' If they ask you: 'Would it not be good to hang them from the trees?' you shall answer: 'By no means would it be well, because then you shall see their faces again.' And when for the third time they ask you: 'Would it be good to throw their bones into the river?' If you were asked all the above by them, you should answer: 'It would be well if they were to die that way; then it would be well to crush their bones on a grinding stone, as corn meal is ground; let each one be ground [separately]; throw them into the river immediately, there where the spring gushes forth, in order that they may be carried away among all the small and large hills.' Thus you shall answer them when the plan which we have advised you is put into practice," said Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé. And when they [the boys] took leave of them, they already knew about their approaching death.

They made then, a great bonfire, a kind of oven; the men of Xibalba made it and filled it with thick branches.

Shortly afterward the messengers arrived who had to accompany [the boys], the messengers of Hun-Caméé and Vucub-Caméé.

"Tell them to come. Go and get the boys; go there so that they may know we are going to burn them."

This the lords said, oh, boys!" the messengers exclaimed.

"It is well," they answered. And setting out quickly, they arrived near the bonfire. There [the Lords of

Xibalba] wanted to force the boys to play a mocking game with them.

"Let us drink our chicha and fly four times, each one, [over the bonfire] boys!" was said to them by Hun-Camée.

"Do not try to deceive us," [the boys] answered. "Perchance, we do not know about our death, oh lords! and that this is what awaits us here?" And embracing each other, face to face, they both stretched out their arms, bent toward the ground and jumped into the bonfire, and thus the two died together.

All those of Xibalba were filled with joy, shouting and whistling they exclaimed: "Now we have overcome them. At last they have given themselves up."

Immediately they called Xulúú and Pacam, to whom they [the boys] had given their instructions, and asked them what they must do with their bones, as they [the boys] had foretold. Those of Xibalba then ground their bones and went to cast them into the river. But the bones did not go very far, for settling themselves down at once on the bottom of the river, they were changed back into handsome boys. And when again they showed themselves, they really had their same old faces.

Chapter 13

On the fifth day they appeared again and were seen in the water by the people. Both had the appearance of fish-men; when those of Xibalba saw them, after having hunted them all over the river.

And the following day, two poor men presented themselves with very old-looking faces and of miserable appearance, [and] ragged clothes, whose countenances did not commend them. So they were seen by all those of Xibalba.

And what they did was very little. They only performed the dance of the puhuy [owl or churn-owl], the dance of the cux [weasel], and the dance of the iboy [armadillo], and they also danced the xtzul [centipede] and the chitic [that walks on stilts] .

Furthermore, they worked many miracles. They burned houses as though they really were burning and instantly they were as they had been before. Many of those of Xibalba watched them in wonder.

Presently they cut themselves into bits; they killed each other; the first one whom they had killed stretched out as though he were dead, and instantly the other brought him back to life. Those of Xibalba looked on in amazement at all they did, and they performed it, as the beginning of their triumph over those of Xibalba.

Presently word of their dances came to the ears of the lords Hun-Camée and Vucub-Camée. Upon hearing it they exclaimed: "Who are these two orphans? Do they really give you so much pleasure?"

"Surely their dances are very beautiful, and all that they do," answered he who had brought the news to the lords.

Happy to hear this, the [lords] then sent their messengers to call [the boys] with flattery. "Tell them to come here, tell them to come so that we may see what they do; that we may admire them and regard them with wonder," this the lords said. 'So you shall say unto them,' " this was told to the messengers.

They arrived at once before the dancers and gave them the message of the lords.

"We do not wish to," the [boys] answered, "because, frankly, we are ashamed. How could we not but be ashamed to appear in the house of the lords with our ugly countenances, our eyes which are so big, and our poor appearance? Do you not see that we are nothing more than some [poor] dancers? What shall we tell our companions in poverty who have come with us and wish to see our dances and be entertained by them? How could we do our dances before the lords? For that reason, then, we do not want to go, oh, messengers," said Hunahpúú and Xbalanqué.

Finally, with downcast faces and with reluctance and sorrow they went; but for a while they did not wish to walk, and the messengers had to beat them in the face many times, when they led them to the house of the lords.

They arrived, then, before the lords, timid and with head bowed; they came prostrating themselves, making reverences and humiliating themselves. They looked feeble, ragged, and their appearance was really that of vagabonds when they arrived.

They were questioned immediately about their country and their people; they also asked them about their mother and their father.

"Where do you come from?" [the lords] said.

"We do not know, Sir. We do not know the faces of our mother and father; we were small when they died," they answered, and did not say another word.

"All right. Now do [your dances] so that we may admire you. What do you want? We shall give you pay," they told them.

"We do not want anything; but really we are very much afraid," they said to the lord.

"Do not grieve, do not be afraid. Dance! And do first the part in which you kill yourselves; burn my house, do all that you know how to do. We shall marvel at you, for that is what our hearts desire. And afterwards, poor things, we shall give help for your journey," they told them.

Then they began to sing and dance. All the people of Xibalba arrived and gathered together in order to see them. Then they performed the dance of the cux, they danced the puhuy, and they danced the iboy. And the lord said to them: "Cut my dog into pieces and let him be brought back to life by you," he said to them.

"Very well," they answered, and cut the dog into bits. Instantly they brought him back to life. The dog was truly full of joy when he was brought back to life, and wagged his tail when they revived him.

The Lord said to them then: "Burn my house now!" Thus he said to them. Instantly they put fire to the lord's house, and although all the lords were assembled together within the house, they were not burned. Quickly it was whole again, and not for one instant was the house of Hun-Camée destroyed.

All of the lords were amazed, and in the same way the [boys'] dances gave them much pleasure.

Then they were told by the lord: "Now kill a man, sacrifice him, but do not let him die," he told them.

"Very well," they answered. And seizing a man, they quickly sacrificed him, and raising his heart on high, they held it so that all the lords could see it.

Again Hun-Camée and Vucub-Camée were amazed. A moment afterward the man was brought back to life by them [the boys], and his heart was filled with joy when he was revived.

The lords were astounded. "Sacrifice yourselves now, let us see it! We really like your dances!" said the lords. "Very well, Sirs," they answered. And they proceeded to sacrifice each other. Hunahpúú was sacrificed by Xbalanquéé; one by one his arms and his legs were sliced off; his head was cut from his body and carried away; his heart was torn from his breast and thrown onto the grass. All the Lords of Xibalba were fascinated. They looked on in wonder, but really it was only the dance of one man; it was Xbalanquéé.

"Get up!" he said, and instantly [Hunahpúú] returned to life. They [the boys] were very happy and the lords were also happy. In truth, what they did gladdened the hearts of Hun-Camée and Vucub-Camée, and the latter felt as though they themselves were dancing.

Then their hearts were filled with desire and longing by the dances of Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé; and Hun-Camée and Vucub-Camée gave their commands.

"Do the same with us! Sacrifice us!" they said. "Cut us into pieces, one by one!" Hun-Camée and Vucub-Camée said to Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé.

"Very well; afterward you will come back to life again. Perchance, did you not bring us here in order that we should entertain you, the lords, and yours sons, and vassals?" they said to the lords.

And so it happened that they first sacrificed the one, who was the chief and [Lord of Xibalba], the one called Hun-Camée, king of Xibalba.

And when Hun-Camée was dead, they overpowered Vucub-Camée, and they did not bring either of them back to life.

The people of Xibalba fled as soon as they saw that their lords were dead and sacrificed. In an instant both were sacrificed. And this they [the boys] did in order to chastise them. Quickly the principal lord was killed. And they did not bring him back to life.

And another lord humbled himself then, and presented himself before the dancers. They had not discovered him, nor had they found him. "Have mercy on me!" he said when they found him.

All the sons and vassals of Xibalba fled to a great ravine, and all of them were crowded into this narrow, deep place. There they were crowded together and hordes of ants came and found them and dislodged them from the ravine. In this way [the ants] drove them to the road, and when they arrived [the people] prostrated themselves and gave themselves up; they humbled themselves and arrived., grieving.

In this way the Lords of Xibalba were overcome. Only by a miracle and by their [own] transformation could [the boys] have done it.

Chapter 14

Immediately [the boys] told their names and they extolled themselves before all the people of Xibalba.

"Hear our names. We shall also tell you the names of our fathers. We are Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé; those are our names. And our fathers are those whom you killed and who were called Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú. We, those whom you see here, are, then, the avengers of the torments and suffering of our fathers. That is the reason why we resent all the evil you have done to them. Therefore,

we shall put an end to all of you, we shall kill you, and not one of you shall escape," they said.

Instantly all the people of Xibalba fell to their knees, crying.

"Have mercy on us, Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé! It is true that we sinned against your fathers as you said, and that they are buried in Puchbal-Chah," they said.

"Very well. This is our sentence, that we are going to tell you. Hear it, all you of Xibalba:

"Since neither your great power nor your race any longer exist, and since neither do you deserve mercy, your rank shall be lowered. Not for you shall be the ball game. You shall spend your time making earthen pots and tubs and stones to grind corn. Only the children of the thickets and desert shall speak with you. The noble sons, the civilized vassals shall not consort with you, and they will forsake your presence. The sinners, the evil ones, the sad ones, the unfortunate ones, those who give themselves up to vice, these are the ones who will welcome you. No longer will you seize men suddenly [for sacrifice]; remember your rank has been lowered."

Thus they spoke to all the people of Xibalba.

In this way their destruction and their lamentations began. Their power in the olden days was not much. They only liked to do evil to men in those times. In truth, in those days, they did not have the category of gods. Furthermore, their horrible faces frightened people. They were the enemies, the owls. They incited to evil, to sin and to discord.

They were also false in their hearts, black and white at the same time, envious and tyrannical according to what was said of them. Furthermore, they painted and greased their faces.

In this way, then, occurred the loss of their grandeur and the decadence of their empire.

And this was what Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé did.

Meanwhile, the grandmother was crying and lamenting before the reeds which they had left planted. The reeds sprouted, then they dried up when [the boys] were consumed in the bonfire; afterward [the reeds] sprouted again. Then the grandmother lighted the fire and burned incense before the reeds in memory of her grandchildren. And the grandmother's heart filled with joy when, for the second time, the reeds sprouted. Then they were worshipped by the grandmother, and she called them the Center of the House, Nicah [the center] they were called.

"Green reeds growing in the plains" [Cazam Ah Chatam Uleu] was their name. And they were called the Center of the House and the Center, because in the middle of the house they planted the reeds. And the reeds, which were planted, were called the plains, Green Reeds growing on the plains. They also were called Green Reeds because they had resprouted. This name was given them by Xmucanéé [given] to those [reeds] which Hunahpúú and Xbalanquéé left planted in order that they should be remembered by their grandmother.

Well, now, their fathers, those who died long ago, were Hun-Hunahpúú and Vucub-Hunahpúú. They also saw the faces of their fathers there in Xibalba and their fathers talked with their descendants, that is the ones who overthrew those of Xibalba.

And here is how their fathers were honored by them. They honored Vucub-Hunahpúú; they went to honor him at the place of sacrifice of the ball-court. And at the same time they wanted to make Vucub-Hunahpúú's face. They hunted there for his entire body, his mouth, his nose, his eyes. They found his body, but it could do very little. It could not pronounce his name, this Hunahpúú. Neither could his mouth say it.

And here is how they extolled the memory of their fathers, whom they had left there in the place of sacrifice at the ball-court: "You shall be invoked," their sons said to them, when they fortified their heart.

"You shall be the first to arise, and you shall be the first to be worshipped by the sons of the noblemen, by the civilized vassals. Your names shall not be lost. So it shall be!" they told their fathers and thus consoled themselves. "We are the avengers of your death, of the pains and sorrows which they caused you."

Thus was their leave-taking, when they had already overcome all the people of Xibalba.

Then they rose up in the midst of the light, and instantly they were lifted into the sky. One was given the sun, the other, the moon. Then the arch of heaven and the face of the earth were lighted. And they dwelt in heaven.

Then the four hundred boys whom Zipacnáá had killed, also ascended, and so they again became the companions of [the boys] and were changed into stars in the sky.

PART III (Sociogony)

Chapter 1

Here, then, is the beginning of when it was decided to make man, and when what must enter into the flesh of man was sought.

And the Forefathers, the Creators and Makers, who were called Tepeu and Gucumatz said: "The time of dawn has come, let the work be finished, and let those who are to nourish and sustain us appear, the noble sons, the civilized vassals; let man appear, humanity, on the face of the earth." Thus they spoke. They assembled, came together and held council in the darkness and in the night; then they sought and discussed, and here they reflected and thought. In this way their decisions came clearly to light and they found and discovered what must enter into the flesh of man.

It was just before the sun, the moon, and the stars appeared over the Creators and Makers.

From Paxil, from Cayaláá, as they were called, came the yellow ears of corn and the white ears of corn. These are the names of the animals which brought the food: yac (the mountain cat), utiúú (the coyote), quel (a small parrot), and hoh (the crow). These four animals gave tidings of the yellow ears of corn and the white ears of corn, they told them that they should go to Paxil and they showed them the road to Paxil.

And thus they found the food, and this was what went into the flesh of created man, the made man; this was his blood; of this the blood of man was made. So the corn entered [into the formation of man] by the work of the Forefathers.

And in this way they were filled with joy, because they had found a beautiful land, full of pleasures, abundant in ears of yellow corn and ears of white corn, and abundant also in pataxte and cacao, and in innumerable zapotes, anonas, jocotes, nantzes, matasanos, and honey. There was an abundance of delicious food in those villages called Paxil and Cayaláá. There were foods of every kind, small and large foods, small plants and large plants.

The animals showed them the road. And then grinding the yellow corn and the white corn, Xmucanéé made nine drinks, and from this food came the strength and the flesh, and with it they created the muscles and the strength of man. This the Forefathers did, Tepeu and Gucumatz, as they were called. After that they began to talk about the creation and the making of our first mother and father; of yellow corn and of white corn they made their flesh; of corn meal dough they made the arms and the legs of man. Only dough of corn meal went into the flesh of our first fathers, the four men, who were created.

Chapter 2

These are the names of the first men who were created and formed: the first man was Balam-Quitzeé, the second, Balam-Acab, the third, Mahucutah, and the fourth was Iqui-Balam.

These are the names of our first mothers and fathers.

It is said that they only were made and formed, they had no mother, they had no father. They were only called men. They were not born of woman, nor were they begotten by the Creator nor by the Maker, nor by the Forefathers. Only by a miracle, by means of incantation were they created and made by the Creator, the Maker, the Forefathers, Tepeu and Gucumatz. And as they had the appearance of men, they were men; they talked, conversed, saw and heard, walked, grasped things; they were good and handsome men, and their figure was the figure of a man.

They were endowed with intelligence; they saw and instantly they could see far, they succeeded in seeing, they succeeded in knowing all that there is in the world. When they looked, instantly they saw all around them, and they contemplated in turn the arch of heaven and the round face of the earth.

The things hidden [in the distance] they saw all, without first having to move; at once they saw the world, and so, too, from where they were, they saw it.

Great was their wisdom; their sight reached to the forests, the rocks, the lakes, the seas, the mountains, and the valleys. In truth, they were admirable men, Balam-Quitzeé, Balam-Acab, Mahucutah, and Iqui-Balam.

Then the Creator and the Maker asked them: "What do you think of your condition? Do you not see? Do you not hear? Are not your speech and manner of walking good? Look, then! Contemplate the world, look [and see] if the mountains and the valleys appear! Try, then, to see!" they said to [the four first men].

And immediately they [the four first men] began to see all that was in the world. Then they gave thanks to the Creator and the Maker: "We really give you thanks, two and three times! We have been created, we have been given a mouth and a face, we speak, we hear, we think, and walk; we feel perfectly, and we know what is far and what is near. We also see the large and the small in the sky and on earth. We give you thanks, then, for having created us, oh, Creator and Maker! for having given us being, oh, our grandmother! oh, our grandfather!" they said, giving thanks for their creation and formation.

They were able to know all, and they examined the four corners, the four points of the arch of the sky and the round face of the earth.

But the Creator and the Maker did not hear this with pleasure. "It is not well what our creatures, our works say; they know all, the large and the small," they said. And so the Forefathers held counsel again. "What shall we do with them now? Let their sight reach only to that which is near; let them see only a little of the face of the earth! It is not well what they say. Perchance, are they not by nature simple creatures of our making? Must they also be gods? And if they do not reproduce and multiply when it will dawn, when the sun rises? And what if they do not multiply?" So they spoke.

"Let us check a little their desires, because it is not well what we see. Must they perchance be the equals of ourselves, their Makers, who can see afar, who know all and see all?"

Thus spoke the Heart of Heaven, Huracáán, Chipi-Caculháá, Raxa-Caculháá, Tepeu, Gucumatz, the Forefathers, Xpiyacoc, Xmucanéé, the Creator and the Maker. Thus they spoke, and immediately they changed the nature of their works, of their creatures.

Then the Heart of Heaven blew mist into their eyes, which clouded their sight as when a mirror is breathed upon. Their eyes were covered and they could see only what was close, only that was clear to them.

In this way the wisdom and all the knowledge of the four men, the origin and beginning [of the Quichéé race], were destroyed.

In this way were created and formed our grandfathers, our fathers, by the Heart of Heaven, the Heart of Earth.

Chapter 3

Then their wives had being, and their women were made. God himself made them carefully. And so, during sleep, they came, truly beautiful, their women, at the side of Balam-Quitzeé, Balam-Acab, Mahucutah, and Iqui-Balam.

There were their women when they awakened, and instantly their hearts were filled with joy because of their wives.

Here are the names of their wives: Caháá-Paluna was the name of the wife of Balam-Quitzeé; Chomiháá was the wife of Balam-Acab; Tzununiháá, the wife of Mahucutah; and Caquixaháá was the name of the wife of Iqui-Balam. These are the names of their wives, who were distinguished women.

They conceived the men, of the small tribes and of the large tribes, and were the origin of us; the people of Quichéé.

There were many priests and sacrificers; there were not only four, but those four were the Forefathers of us, the people of the Quichéé.

The names of each one were different when they multiplied there in the East, and there were many names of the people: Tepeu, Olomáán, Cohah, Quenech, Ahau, as they called those men there in the East, where they multiplied.

The beginning is known, too, of those of Tamub and those of Ilocab who came together from there in the East.

Balam-Quitzeé was the grandfather and the father of the nine great houses of the Cavec; Balam-Acab was the grandfather and father of the nine great houses of the Nimhaib; Mahucutah, the grandfather and father of the four great houses of Ahau-Quichéé.

Three groups of families existed; but they did not forget the name of their grandfather and father, those who propagated and multiplied there in the East.

The Tamub and Ilocab also came, and thirteen branches of peoples, the thirteen of Tecpáán, and those of Rabinal, the Cakchiquel, those from Tziquinaháá, and the Zacaháá and the Lamaq, Cumatz, Tuhalháá, Uchabaháá, those of Chumilaháá, those of Quibaháá, of Batenabáá, Acul-Vinac, Balamiháá, the Canchahel, and Balam-Colob.

These are only the principal tribes, the branches of the people which we mention; only of the principal ones shall we speak. Many others came from each group of the people, but we shall not write their names. They also multiplied there in the East.

Many men were made and in the darkness they multiplied. Neither the sun nor the light had yet been made when they multiplied. All lived together, they existed in great number and walked there in the East. Nevertheless, they did not sustain nor maintain [their God]; they only raised their faces to the sky, and they did not know why they had come so far as they did.

There they were then, in great number, the black men and the white men, men of many classes, men of

many tongues, that it was wonderful to hear them.

There are generations in the world, there are country people, whose faces we do not see, who have no homes, they only wander through the small and large woodlands, like crazy people. So it is said scornfully of the people of the wood. So they said there, where they saw the rising of the sun.

The speech of all was the same. They did not invoke wood nor stone, and they remembered the word of the Creator and the Maker, the Heart of Heaven, the Heart of Earth.

In this manner they spoke, while they thought about the coming of the dawn. And they raised their prayers, those worshipers of the word [of God], loving, obedient, and fearful, raising their faces to the sky when they asked for daughters and sons:

"Oh thou, Tzacol, Bitol! Look at us, hear us! Do not leave us, do not forsake us, oh, God, who art in heaven and on earth, Heart of Heaven, Heart of Earth! Give us our descendants, our succession, as long as the sun shall move and there shall be light. Let it dawn; let the day come! Give us many good roads, flat roads! May the people have peace, much peace, and may they be happy; and give us good life and useful existence! Oh, thou Huracáán, Chipi-Caculháá, Raxa-Caculháá, Chipi-Nanauac, Raxa-Nanauac, Voc, Hunahpúú, Tepeu, Gucumatz, Alom, Qaholom, Xpiyacoc, Xmucanéé, grandmother of the sun, grandmother of the light, let there be dawn, and let the light come!"

Thus they spoke while they saw and invoked the coming of the sun, the arrival of day; and at the same time that they saw the rising of the sun, they contemplated the Morning Star, the Great Star, which comes ahead of the sun, that lights up the arch of the sky and the surface of the earth, and illuminates the steps of the men who had been created and made.

Chapter 4

Balam-Quitzeé, Balam-Acab, Mahucutah, and Iqui-Balam said, "Let us await the break of day." So said those great wise men, the enlightened men, the priests and sacrificers. This they said.

Our first mothers and fathers did not yet have wood nor stones to keep; but their hearts were tired of waiting for the sun. Already all the tribes and the Yaqui people, the priests and sacrificers, were very many.

"Let us go, let us go to search and see if our [tribal] symbols are in safety; if we can find what we must burn before them. For being as we are, there is no one who watches for us," said Balam-Quitzeé, Balam-Acab, Mahucutah, and Iqui-Balam.

And having heard of a city, they went there.

Now then, the name of the place where Balam-Quitzeé, Balam-Acab, Mahucutah, and Iqui-Balam and those of Tamub and Ilocab went was Tuláán-Zuiva, Vucub-Pec, Vucub-Ziváán. This was the name of the city where they went to receive their gods.

So, then, all arrived at Tuláán. It was impossible to count the men who arrived; there were very many and they walked in an orderly way.

Then was the appearance of their gods; first those of Balam-Quitzeé, Balam-Acab, Mahucutah, and Iqui-Balam, who were filled with joy: "At last we have found that for which we searched!" they said.

And the first that appeared was Tohil, as this god was called, and Balam-Quitzeé put him on his back, in his chest. Instantly the god called Avilix appeared, and Balam-Acab carried him. The god called Hacavitz was carried by Mahucutah; and Iqui-Balam carried the one called Nicahtacah.

And together with the people of the Quichéé, they also received those of Tamub. And in the same way Tohil was the name of the god of the Tamub who received the grandfather and father of the Lords of Tamub, whom we know today.

In the third place were those of Ilocab. Tohil was also the name of the god who was received by the grandfathers and the fathers of the lords, whom we also know today.

In this way, the three Quichéé [families] were given their names and they did not separate, because they had a god of the same name, Tohil of the Quichéé, Tohil of the Tamub and [Tohil] of the Ilocab; one only was the name of the god, and therefore the three Quichéé [families] did not separate.

Great indeed was the virtue of the three, Tohil, Avilix, and Hacavitz.

Then all the people arrived, those from Rabinal, the Cakchiquel, those from Tziquinaháá, and the people who now are called the Yaqui. And there it was that the speech of the tribes changed; their tongues became different. They could no longer understand each other clearly after arriving at Tuláán. There also they separated, there were some who had to go to the East, but many came here.

And their clothing was only the skins of animals; they had no good clothes to put on, the skins of animals were their only dress. They were poor, they possessed nothing, but they had the nature of extraordinary

men.

When they arrived at Tuláán-Zuiva, Vucub-Pec, Vucub-Ziváán, the old traditions say that they had traveled far in order to arrive there.

Chapter 5

And they did not have fire. Only the people of Tohil had it. He was the god of the tribes which first created fire. It is not known how it was made, because it was already burning when Balam-Quitzeé and Balam-Acab saw it.

"Ah, we have no fire yet! be what is spoken of as lost fire," Tohil said to them.

"Really? Oh, God, our support, our maintenance, thou, our God!" they said, returning thanks.

And Tohil answered: "Very well, certainly I am your God; so shall it be! I am your Lord; so let it be!" Thus it was told to the priests and sacrificers by Tohil. And in this manner the tribes received fire and they were joyful because of it.

Instantly a great shower began to fall when the fire of the tribes was burning. Much hail fell on all the tribes and the fire was put out because of it, and again the fire was extinguished.

Then Balam-Quitzeé and Balam-Acab again asked Tohil for fire. "Oh, Tohil, we are truly dying of cold!" they said to Tohil.

"Very well, do not worry," Tohil answered, and instantly he made fire, turning about in his shoe.

Balam-Quitzeé, Balam-Acab, Mahucutah, and Iqui-Balam were at once happy and immediately they became warm.

Now, the fire of the peoples [of Vucamag] had also gone out and they were dying of cold. Immediately they came to ask Balam-Quitzeé, Balam-Acab, Mahucutah, and Iqui-Balam for fire. They could no longer bear the cold nor the ice; they were shivering and their teeth were chattering; they were numb; their legs and hands shook and they could not hold anything in them, when they came.

"We are not ashamed to come before you, to beg for a little of your fire," they said. But they were not well received. And then the tribes were very sad.

"The speech of Balam-Quitzeé, Balam-Acab, Mahucutah, and Iqui-Balam is different! Oh! We have given up our speech! What have we done? We are lost. How were we deceived? We had only one speech when we arrived there at Tuláán; we were created and educated in the same way. It is not good what we have done," said all the tribes under the trees, under the vines.

Then a man came before Balam-Quitzeé, Balam-Acab, Mahucutah, and Iqui-Balam and [this man], who was a messenger of Xibalba, spoke thus: "This is, in truth, your God; this is your support; this is, furthermore, the representation, the memory of your Creator and Maker. Do not give your fire to the tribes until they present offerings to Tohil. It is not necessary that they give anything to you. Ask Tohil what they should give when they come to receive fire," said the man from Xibalba. He had wings like the wings of a bat. "I am sent by your Creator, your Maker," said the man of Xibalba.

They were filled with joy then, and Tohil, Avilix, and Hacavitz were also gladdened when the man from Xibalba spoke, who disappeared instantly from their presence.

But the tribes did not perish when they came, although they were dying of cold. There was much hail, black rain and mist, and indescribable cold.

All the tribes were trembling and shivering with cold when they came where Balam-Quitzeé, Balam-Acab, Mahucutah, and Iqui-Balam were. Their hearts were greatly troubled and their mouths and eyes were sad.

In a moment the beggars came before Balam-Quitzeé, Balam-Acab, Mahucutah, and Iqui-Balam and said: "Will you not have pity on us, we only ask a little of your fire? Perchance, were we not [once] together and reunited? Did we not have the same home and one country when we were created, when we were made? Have mercy, then, on us!" they said.

"What will you give us so that we shall have mercy on you?" they were asked.

"Well, then, we shall give you money," the tribes answered.

"We do not want money," said Balam-Quitzeé and Balam-Acab.

"And what do you want?" [asked the tribes]

"We shall ask now." [said Balam-Quitzeé]

"Very well," said the tribes.

"We shall ask Tohil and then we shall tell you," they answered.

"What must the tribes give, oh, Tohil! who have come to ask for your fire?" said Balam-Quitzeé, Balam-Acab, Mahucutah, and Iqui-Balam.

"Well! Are they willing to give their waist and their armpits? Do they want me to embrace them? For if they do not want to do that, neither shall I give them fire," answered Tohil.

"Tell them that this shall come later, that they do not have to come now to give me their waist and their armpits. This is what Tohil orders us to tell you, you will say." This was the answer to Balam-Quitzéé, Balam-Acab, Mahucutah, and Iqui-Balam.

Then they took Tohil's message. "Very well, we shall join you and we shall embrace him," they [the people] said when they heard and were told the message from Tohil. And they did not delay in acting.

"Good," they said, "but may it be soon!" And immediately they received the fire. Then they became warm.